

Meet your Students' Union Executive - p 12 & 13

CCTV only solution to carpark robberies, say gárdaí

DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY & ALAN OWENS

EQUIPMENT worth thousands of euro was robbed from a student's car in the pay car park on Thursday 19th October. The student had locked his laptop along with those of his friends in the boot of his Fiat Punto at approximately 6pm before going to an event in the University. Upon returning at 11pm the group found that the car door had been prised open with what seemed to be a crow bar and that the items in the

boot, including laptops, MP3 players and college notes, had been removed.

All four students who were affected are third year IT&T students, most of whose coursework would have been contained in their laptops. The matter was reported to security, who mentioned to the group that theirs was the second break-in to take place in the car park that day. Gardaí are investigating the robbery but are not hopeful of a successful outcome.

Since this was reported, at least eight cars have been broken into in car parks on

campus - gárdaí called to the scene identified CCTV as the only solution to this problem. According to John McDonnell, Head of Security, cameras are on their way but it's up to individuals to report incidents and not to leave valuables in their cars as bait for thieves. The key, he added, is constant monitoring of footage. The authorities are reluctant to have a defined perimeter on the campus, so the equipment will be put in place with a view to retaining an open campus.

Class Reps Council elects new Officers

NIAMH CLOWRY

THE Class Reps Council of the University elected new officers for the forthcoming academic year at its meeting on Wednesday of week four, following a number of votes on the night. The new Chairperson of Council is Steve O'Brien, a third year Biomedical and Advanced Materials student. Deputy Chairperson is Aoife Finnerty, a second year Law and European Studies student.

The various College Council Officers were also elected. Each Faculty of the College is represented by one student and those elected are as follows: Student Teacher Officer, Sean Kelly, a first year student of Physical Education; Business Officer, David Ryan, second year Business and French; Engineering Officer, Katie Mahar, second year

Mechanical Engineering; Humanities Officer, Jason Griffin, first year Economics and Sociology; Informatics and Electronics Officer, Patrick McNamara, fourth year Computer Systems; and Science Officer Sarah Hogan, first year Pharmaceutical and Industrial Chemistry.

Student Teacher Officer Sean Kelly will also represent all the College Officers as a voting member of the Executive. A First Year Rep was also elected on the night, William Rotte, a first year student of Physical Education, who will also be a member of the Executive, in a non voting capacity.

Further to these positions a number of students were also elected to the various working groups, namely the Entertainments Committee, Presidential Working Group,

Welfare Working Group, Campaigns Working Group, Class Rep Development Working Group and Irish Working Group. Members of Council also voted members of the Council on to the USLU Services Ltd Committee and the Commission of Arbitration. Education Officer, Alan Higgins said on that night that he was 'very grateful to all students who have shown an interest and taken up positions in Council and in the working groups, and I look forward to working with them throughout the year, especially in the development and strengthening of the role of Class Reps Council.'

With all positions now filled, the work for the current academic year is now underway and it is hoped that all Class Reps will be able to facilitate the students of UL in their aspirations for the year ahead.

Brookfield refuses to house student parent

AN Focal has learned that a second year student who applied for a room in Brookfield Hall was refused because she had a four month old baby.

The student, who does not wish to be named, rang Brookfield Hall reception last May to enquire if there were places available for the summer. She was not given any indication that the complex was full until she mentioned that she had a four month old baby and she was willing to pay for a two bedroom apartment in order not to inconvenience any other students. At this point she was told the manager had to be consulted, and when the conversation resumed she was informed that she couldn't be accommodated.

When An Focal contacted Brookfield Hall for a response they claimed to be unaware of

any such conversation. According to Brookfield Hall manager Mr Ger Moore, Brookfield only has 234 spaces and they 'probably hadn't got a space available.' However, Mr Moore went on to add that 'kids are not allowed in the facility during the semester because it's section 50.' However, section 50 restrictions do not apply during the period in question, which was outside the academic year.

Section 50 Housing is designated for students only. This allows special tax breaks for the owners, providing the units are occupied by students only for a period of ten years. After this period has lapsed and outside the academic year the units may be let to non-students. According to legal advice received by An Focal, 'the refusal to accommodate her may well be



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

discrimination on the grounds of family status under the Equal Status Act 2000.'

ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey told An Focal that 'The refusal by Brookfield Hall to accommodate the student parent is quite clearly discriminatory. It is a disgrace and an outrage that something like this would occur and it clearly needs to be addressed by Brookfield. An apology to the student in question is something that should be issued at the very least.'

Brookfield Hall



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SUPERQUINN

Quotes of the fortnight

- 'Why'd you ask me to do it anyway? I'm the most unreliable person around.'
SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin shocks his fellow officers with this frank admission of unreliability.
- 'This [the Student Affairs committee] is not the place to discuss it [the Student Affairs Officer].'
Director of Student Affairs Dr. Bernadette Walsh clarifies the agenda at a meeting of the Student Affairs Committee.
- 'I can have you killed you know.'
SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin to Education Officer Alan Higgins, upon which CSO Alannah Turner (responsible for Ents Crew) replied, 'Oh no no no... I can have you killed.'
- 'Dave McSavage has put himself on the wall of hate due to him cancelling on us at 11.37 last [Sunday] night. Bastard.'
UL Laughing Soc Chair Eoin Kelly doesn't hold back.
- 'No, we don't want sponsorship... that'd mean we'd have to wear green Ulster Bank Santa hats and Christmas suits...'
A student organising a Christmas fair shows his disgust for all things commercial.
- 'Michael O' Leary is the poster boy for capitalism in this country.'
Business student Eamonn Quinlan at the Business College Days debate, chaired by KBS Dean Donal Dineen.
- 'No way! We won't pay!'
Students at the march against the car park increase voice their concern.

IN THE UNION THIS FORTNIGHT:

- " Business College Day
- " Car parking campaign & protest march
- " Environmental Awareness campaign
- " Halloween Ball
- " An Focal
- " Class reps council
- " Election of college officers & chair CRC
- " New executive convened
- " Governing Authority
- " Childcare bursaries allocated

EDITORIAL



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

WHILE the car parking campaign currently being run here in the Students' Union has gone from strength to strength on the issue of paying for the Living Bridge, many related questions have arisen from the debate around it.

It's not surprising that students and staff are outraged at having to pay for parking spaces to fund the bridge. However, the campaign, along with the exponential increase in break-ins and thefts from cars on campus, has also raised the question of value for money. Paying €3 implies to most people that they are getting some kind of service for their cash, and there is no information on the sign or elsewhere to tell them otherwise. The theft of three laptops and many more radios, wallets and other valuables has incensed victims, who don't see why they should pay to be robbed.

Campus Security has promised to step up security patrols around car parks and to have security cameras installed as soon as possible. However, it may be a question of 'too little, too late' for the victims of theft, particularly those who have had laptops containing years of work stolen.

The idea that students shouldn't be driving to college at all is dealt with elsewhere in this publication (*see Deep Throat p9*), but suffice it to reiterate here that driving is not always a choice, sometimes it's a necessity.

The main issue the SU has with the car park increase is students funding the Living Bridge. In the current debate the side issues of value for money, environmental impact and the execrable public transport in the UL vicinity are threatening to overshadow the main issue - students pay registration and staff pay taxes to fund capital projects. Taxation of students and staff to pay for this bridge is not just inconvenient and expensive, it's the first step down a slippery slope to paying for every new University structure.

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Biggest Careers Fair ever



BY ALAN OWENS

THE recently-held Careers Fair was widely acknowledged among students and employers to be a huge success. The fair, which took place on Wednesday of week four in the Sports Arena, was attended by approximately two thousand students.

This year's fair was the biggest ever held in UL, with 98 stands, featuring employers from a broad range of areas. In fact, outside of Dublin, where the Universities combine to hold their own careers fair, the Limerick event is the biggest in the country.

The fair is organised by Mary Sweeney, Head of Careers in the Cooperative Education and Careers Division. According to Mary the feedback she receives from employers is always extremely positive. 'Employers cite UL graduates as very focussed, very well-prepared and always having specific questions to ask of prospective employers' she said.

A broad range of employers were in attendance, featuring many from the financial services area, the software industry, overseas teaching agents, the civil service and the defence forces. This year there was a large attendance from companies in the international aviation industry such as Lufthansa and Airbus.

Many exhibitors are consistent attendees and one company, Fidelity Investments, remarked to Mary that the UL event is 'streets ahead of other careers

fairs'.

I spoke to several employers who outlined their reasons for attending. Mr John English, a UL graduate now working with BDO Simpson Xavier accountants in Limerick told me that BDO 'have a long-running association with UL graduates as a result of the Careers Fair'.

He went on to say that 'we are always interested in recruiting UL graduates as they are confident and successful, and indeed one of our own directors is a former UL graduate himself'.

The Deloitte and Touche exhibit also featured two former UL business graduates, Mr Ross Nicholas and Ms Clare O'Donoghue, who were returning to encourage applications from current UL students. Mr Nicholas told me that 'UL graduates are particularly notable for their great enthusiasm and drive, and are very highly thought of in the financial services industry'.



Wietse Buwauda of the 32nd Infantry Battalion, Cork with Brid Enright, Woodlawn Limerick and Emma Dwane.

This positive attitude was also reflected among the students attending. Two fourth year business students An Focal spoke to said they hadn't realised the many graduate opportunities available to them. They also felt that it was great to be able to talk to employers informally and face to face.

There was a feeling among some humanities students that there was a particular emphasis on the financial services sector. Mary Sweeney explained that this is because 'the financial services companies are the most organised, and that 38% of all UL graduates go into this area'.

Mary even had to refuse some employers who wished to exhibit. 'I had to turn down a few employers, as we ran out of space, but I'm hoping to squeeze in a few more next year!'

High emotions at carpark meeting

SEAMUS RYAN

A well-attended meeting in An Phluis on Thursday 20 October discussed the recent rise in car-parking charges from €2 to €3 made by university authorities.

The enthusiastic crowd, highly critical of the increased charge, examined the funding of the 'Living Bridge' as the stated reason for the extra charge before making suggestions for useful protests and demonstrations as well as raising awareness of the campaign throughout the UL campus.

The meeting was chaired by SU President St. John O'Donnabhain, who said 'The SU is completely against this fee and we'll take all necessary action to have it reversed'. All five SU

sabbatical officers attended in order to demonstrate how seriously the union is taking the issue.

The action of university authorities to raise the charge over the summer period when students and many staff were not on campus came in for some considerable discussion, with those present at the meeting especially critical of the timing of the decision.

While some students were in favour of taking direct protest action immediately, it was decided to follow a procedure of initially submitting a petition signed by UL students to acting university President John O'Connor before taking additional action. A number of attendees volunteered to help the SU's campaign.

Students expressed

considerable concern at what they viewed as the apparent inability of university authorities to control their own budget, given the rise in costs from an original estimate of 12 million euros to a currently projected cost of 16 million euros. The 'Living Bridge' project itself was heavily criticised. While a pedestrian bridge to the north campus was regarded as a necessary project by those present, one student accused university authorities of embarking on 'an unnecessary Ceausescu-style affair to their own memory'. This view was echoed by another attendee who thought 16 million euros was quite an expensive day out just to have some champagne and sandwiches.

The lack of car park security was also criticised, as

well as cases where drivers entered the car park and, unable to find a space, were forced to pay the charge merely to leave and search for a space elsewhere.

Some attendees voiced a fear that this, the second price increase in a few years, is merely the beginning of successive increases to pay for accounting shortfalls by university authorities as, like before, there is no written guarantee that this rise will be the last. The meeting as a whole expressed the view that increases in charges paid by students for services is not a reasonable way to fund capital projects.

Details of the campaign will be publicised by the Students' Union as the campaign progresses.

Another Elm Park attack

TRACY LYNCH

ON Tuesday night of Week 4, October 17th, a third year UL student was attacked in Elm Park whilst walking home from The Lodge. The male student was approached outside the Hurlers pub by two unidentified males. He continued to walk through Elm Park's infamous 'gap in the wall' ignoring the comments. The two youths proceeded to follow him and attacked the student in the predominantly student-occupied estate. One of the attackers pushed him to the ground and dealt out kicks and punches to the student's head and upper body. The other attacker ordered his assailant to take the victim's watch,

wallet, phone and jewellery and after this he continued the attack until he was stopped by his accomplice. At this point, they warned the student to 'get the f*** out here' and commented about their alleged gang related status. The student then ran home. This horrific attack left the student with a burst lip and temporary loss of hearing in one ear. The victim believes the attackers to be from the Limerick vicinity because one of them had a strong accent, but is not sure if they were from the city and its surrounding areas, or if they were students.

Spraoi Luimnigh

BREANDÁN Ó HÉAMHAIGH

SPRAOI Luimnigh, a training weekend organised by An Cumann Gaelach, Na Gaeil Óga Ollscoil Luimnigh, brought the Cumainn Gaelach and branches of Na Gaeil Óga together in UL for a weekend of training and networking which aimed to strengthen the youth movement of the Irish language and create stronger links between the universities Irish Societies. This was the first event of its kind to take place nationally and was acknowledged to be a great success by all involved.

Over the weekend there

were a number of activities, all through Irish. There was training and development, on Committee work, Campaigns and dealing with the media. Workshops on Drama, Dance and song were provided as well as a special workshop on the Bodhrán with Rónán Ó Snodaigh, the front man of Kíla.

On Friday evening Spraoi Luimnigh was opened (about two hours later than advertised) by Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh, Uachtarán an Cumann Gaelach, St. John Ó Donnabháin, Uachtarán Aontas na Mac Léinn, and Deirdre Ní Loingsigh, Stiúrthóir na Gaeilge, Aonad na Gaeilge.

The opening was well attended, considering that most of the delegations had gotten lost along the way and were running late.

On Saturday evening a national meeting of the Irish Societies took place, which was facilitated by Na Gaeil Óga. Saturday evening also saw An Cumann Gaelach welcoming Rónán Ó Snodaigh onto the stage in the Stables where he wowed the crowd with his unique style of music. The stage and the stables were transformed by a genius lighting engineer who was working from 10am getting everything set up for Rónán. Rónán wowed the audience with his

wit and his ability to get the crowd going. He played many favourites, including An Tiománaí, Féach, Cathain and his hit from Ceol '06 bhí mé ann. Rónán helped the assembled colleges to prove for once and for all that Gaeilgeoirí really do it better!

So what was the significance of Spraoi Luimnigh? Never before have the colleges nor young people come together to discuss the Irish Language, never before have they come together. This was tried about 15 years ago, but fell on the rock of apathy, where Spraoi succeeded in getting the movement together. Spraoi may be the place



Rónán Ó Snodaigh playing in the Stables during Spraoi Luimnigh

where the regeneration of the youth movement started, but we will let the historians decide that. One certainty is that Irish societies are going forward as a united front, ready to keep the language

alive. All the societies have reported massive growth in numbers and activity has increased. So... Spraoi 2007 anyone?

Students' Union runs environmental awareness campaign

ALANNAH TURNER

The Students' Union is running an environmental awareness campaign this week which focuses on energy conservation in the home. The campaign aims to show students how making a few simple changes around the house could save them serious money on their bills, especially in light of recent price hikes by the national energy providers. The campaign, using posters and the ULSU website, will be spreading the message throughout Week 6. The Students' Union is also conducting an experiment to prove the amount of money that can be saved simply by following some easy environmental tips. A household of students have agreed to note the units on their electricity boards every week. After one month of monitoring their usage following their normal lifestyles they will start abiding by some environmental

rules. The number of units consumed during the two months will be compared to see what savings have been made.

A lot of the environmental tips which will be given are basic habits which people can adopt to soften the blow bills make on their wallets. People will be reminded to turn off the lights when leaving the room, switch the television off at the plug at night and to not overload the washing machine. Such simple actions can make all the difference! Furthermore, the union is also encouraging students who live close to the University to cycle or walk to college rather than drive. (To leave those overpriced parking spaces for students who don't have an alternative!)

The Students' Union is hopeful that its members will take heed of these suggestions. Not only does it want to save students' money but it also wants to

draw students' attention to current environmental issues. Student Union President St. John Ó Donnabháin pointed out the importance of this campaign. 'In today's world, the issue of environmental awareness is a prominent one. The onus is on every single individual to do their part for the environment, whether that be turning off your television or walking to college rather than driving'.

The Students' Union is just one of many organisations trying to highlight the seriousness of energy conservation. ENFO, an organisation which provides information on the environment, stresses the importance for Irish people to take environmental issues into account when carrying out basic tasks around the home.

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
 Ollscoil Luimnigh

CALLING ALL SCIENCE STUDENTS!!

**DO YOU WANT TO GET
INVOLVED IN YOUR COLLEGE
DAY?**

**DO YOU WANT TO REPRESENT
YOUR YEAR IN THE HUMAN
TABLE FOOTBALL
COMPETITION?**

**DO YOU WANT TO TAKE PART
IN THE WACKY 'BEAUTY'
CONTEST'?**

**TALK TO YOUR CLASS REP
TODAY!**

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
 Ollscoil Luimnigh

Open Days a huge success

SEAMUS RYAN

MONDAY 16th and Tuesday 17th October saw over 9000 secondary school students visit UL for the annual open days.

Groups attended from 175 schools, with 157 of those making formal bookings to attend. Additionally there were small groups and individuals who travelled on their own initiative even though their schools did not send a bus.

This year the format of the days was changed slightly. In previous years, visiting students joined tour groups led by UL student guides. This year, students were provided with a list of times and locations for faculty talks, in part to facilitate students that wished to attend more than

one talk. This appears to have produced mixed results as because student groups were less marshalled than before, visiting students were less inclined to turn up at talks at the designated starting times, especially on the first day.

UL cooperated with LIT and Mary Immaculate in preparing a joint brochure for Limerick Open Days and sent 55,000 of these brochures out to schools in advance of the event. The brochures contained a map of the UL campus and a list of the course talks and locations. Free shuttle buses were offered by UL, LIT and MIC, travelling between all of the campuses in Limerick to facilitate visiting students who wanted to see more than one campus. Guided bus tours of the UL campus were available throughout both days. Eighty

eight student guides were employed over the two days to help people find their way.

A large exhibition was held in the UL Arena, including stands where course details were available as well as participation by UL clubs and societies. Visiting students declared this to be one of the big attractions of the event.

UL stressed the introduction of the three new degree programmes being offered by the university (BA in Modern Languages/ELT, BA (Joint Honours), and BEng in Enterprise Engineering) and details of all three were provided in the were provided to interested students.

Despite the agreement that all classes would be cancelled to facilitate the open days, notably Architecture

students had classes. Some students have also reported that a number of courses in the college of Humanities had lectures and tutorials. Alan Higgins, SU Education Officer, is currently compiling a list of these classes.

Sean Reidy, UL's marketing director, expressed pleasure at the success of UL Open Days 2006, saying that the event was "one of our most successful Open Days in terms of attendance". He intends to intend to implement a web-based booking system for schools for next year. While he has some concerns about the confusion that existed on the first day, he said that every effort would be made next year to control the operation of Open Days more tightly to ensure that there is as little confusion as possible.

'Keep your laptop with you, even if you are only going to the toilet.'

FINN MCDUFFIE

RESearch post-grad, Mr. Greg Scanlon, had his laptop stolen from right under his nose on Monday 16th. Mr. Scanlon who studies how conceptual knowledge can be assessed using computer assisted assessment (CAA), left his desk in the Foundation Building for ten minutes. On returning, his laptop and memory key had been removed. Mr. Scanlon did not unplug the laptop and lock it

in the desk as he 'knew [he] would not be away from the desk for long.' Fortunately, Mr. Scanlon had taken precautions and backed up 'a significant amount' of his research data, however the theft was highly inconvenient and a poor reflection of the Foundation Building's security.

Mr. Scanlon stated in an email to An Focal, 'It has been suggested that I should have been using a locking cable to lock the laptop to the desk which is indeed a valid piece

of advice.' However, he also highlighted his concern that 'only two of the doors to the Foundation Building have security cameras but these are in effect useless as the video tapes are too old to record anything and surely there should be cameras on all of the doors.' He also advised others to 'backup daily'.

Naturally, as we take more of our everyday, electronic necessities to work our chances of having something stolen increase. Theft is an ever-present

problem where people are concentrated. Always be aware of this. It's not just your laptops that are at risk. Mp3 players, mobile phones, wallets and even books are easy targets for thieves.

Following this occurrence the Buildings Dept sent an email to the staff mailing list warning all staff to be vigilant and not to leave valuables unattended in cars or anywhere else.

SOME USEFUL TIPS ON HOW TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION THUS SAVING YOU MONEY FOR THE MORE PLEASURABLE THINGS IN LIFE!

1. Unplug your phone charger - equipment on stand-by uses up to 20% of the energy it would use when fully on.
2. Walk or cycle instead of driving for short journeys - it costs nothing and is good for you.
3. Turn your heating down to a comfortable 20°C - lowering your thermostat by 1°C will knock 10% off your heating bill.
4. Buy 'A' rated kitchen appliances - they cost less to run and over time will give you considerable savings on your electricity bill.
5. Use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) instead of traditional bulbs - they use 20% of the energy and last up to 15 times as long.
6. Wait for the dishwasher to be full before you switch it on - a half full one uses the same energy as a full one.
7. Switch off lights when you leave a room - energy is wasted lighting unoccupied rooms.
8. Don't overfill your kettle - only boil as much water as you need.
9. Check your tyre pressure - a car with correctly inflated tyres is more fuel efficient.
10. Avoid unnecessary electricity use between 5pm and 7pm - help reduce national CO2 emissions.

urISU

Public Meeting

Thursday Week 6

6pm

An Phluais

Like the sound of your own voice?
Get podcasting!
Presenters, producers, loudmouths
and radio heads wanted!

A Free Introductory Bar and Restaurant Service Skills Programme to give you the skills to get a better job and better money.



This two-day Course will take place on
Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th November
2006, from 9.00am to 5.30pm
in Fáilte Ireland Training Centre, Limerick
Enterprise Development Park,
Roxboro Road, Limerick.

Application forms are available
from the Students Union and the
Department of Lifelong
Learning & Outreach,
Room EO021
- Main Building

Applications to be returned
to EO02
no later than
Friday 3rd November 2006

Coming Out

GINA MOLLOY

FOR everyone, the first feelings about sexuality are confusing and uncertain - this is more difficult if your orientation is not heterosexual. It's easy to end up feeling cut off - like you are the only one. That's not the case. Throughout Ireland there are thousands of people who know they are gay/bisexual or think they might be.

Coming out as a lesbian, gay or bisexual in this culture is a lifelong process. It can be frightening and it can be exciting. The LGBT Liaison Officer, Ger Hanley, is running an interactive workshop, over three nights. The stages of coming out will be discussed along with the challenges and benefits of each. The workshop will explore the issues involved and how to decide if coming out to someone will enhance the relationship.

The purpose of this workshop is to help

those struggling with coming out. Objectives for each participant include learning about the process, learning how to better deal with challenges faced in one's journey, and connecting with others who share the same struggle.

This workshop is open to anyone, no matter how closeted or out. To reserve a place in the workshop email: gerard.hanley@ul.ie or lgb-tul@ul.ie (please include Semester 1 - 'Coming-Out' Workshop in subject line). The dates for the Autumn three week workshop will be announced once the minimum number of six participants has been confirmed.

Ger also runs a drop-in in room CM-072 on Monday evenings from 6 - 9pm. This is a confidential service and is open to everybody. Please feel free to make contact at any time with your curiosities, ideas, and concerns.

Gina Molloy is President of Out in UL, the UL LGBT Society.

University of Limerick Receive Largest Grant of €9.6million from Government Strategic Innovation Fund

The University of Limerick welcomes today's announcement by the Minister for Education and Science awarding UL the largest grant of €9.6 million for a range of educational innovations including access programmes, distance learning projects and regional educational partnerships.

"We would particularly like to thank our regional partners, LIT, MIC and IT Tralee that have joined with us to form the Shannon Consortium, an initiative that will change the educational landscape of the Shannon Region. The activities of the Consortium will make it easier for students from marginalised and under-represented communities to gain access to higher education, to gain relevant qualifications and to enjoy productive careers as active members of society. In addition, the partners within the Consortium will put in place a range of learner support programmes designed to help the region's 14,000 students progress through their third-level education, with a focus on student learning needs and styles, delivery of programmes in ways that suit lifelong learners and specific support measures across the Region in areas such as Mathematics and Science," said UL President John O'Connor.

"We also look forward to enhancing the advanced research programmes at UL to allow for Fourth Level initiatives that will help Ireland play its part in the Knowledge Economy. We applaud the foresight of the Minister and the Higher Education Authority in providing such significant support for the advancement of the Irish university sector to meet the needs of society in the coming years," he continued.

"I would like to pay tribute to the UL team led by Vice President Don Barry and my col-

leagues here at UL and in our partner institutions for laying the foundations of truly exciting and innovative educational ventures that will benefit future generations of learners in the Shannon Region," Mr O'Connor concluded.

Campaign for Democracy in the Congo

ROSE BARRETT

FRIDAY 20th of October An Focal met with Maurice, a student at UL. Warm humoured and friendly, Maurice was anxious to spread the word about the new 'Campaign for Democracy in the Congo' that Maurice has set-up alongside some prominent Irish politicians and humanitarians, including the work of politicians from his home land, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

According to BBC News 'A vast country with immense economic resources, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) has been at the centre of what could be termed Africa's world war. This has left it in the grip of a humanitarian crisis. The five-year conflict pitted government forces, supported by Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, against rebels backed by Uganda and Rwanda. Despite a peace deal and the formation of a transitional government in 2003, the threat of civil war remains.'

This has been a struggle of the greatest human loss. Estimates for the loss of human life during the Holocaust range from 6-11 million, the war over the 5 years in DR Congo claimed 4 million and yet you or I may have only ever glanced at an article relating to the topic. War, here, is not only political but also economic. Here is one of the richest sources of minerals in the whole of Africa and control of

this country and its raw materials, in turn, is well sought after. It has been estimated that on average 1000 people a day are dying from war-related causes, namely disease, hunger and violence.

In an age of relative plenty, for the citizens of Ireland, we can often be found going back to our old ways. The past was a time of introverted and dubious interaction with the outside world. We were struggling to make ends meet, to feed families and to 'get on' with our lives. But what is our excuse now? Apart from a minority in our society, today we could be accused of ignoring the plight of the outside world, not because we too are in strife but because we have become apathetic, spoilt and uninterested. So here we have an opportunity to learn and to reach out.

The Campaign is backed by Michael D. Higgins, TD and Michael Kitt, TD, among others. And we may well wonder why Ireland, a quote from the Campaign's leaflet reads; 'Ireland, with its own history of occupation, its historical and current record of compassionate outreach and its vital role in European politics, is ideally suited to make a crucial difference to the suffering people of the 'Democratic Republic' of Congo.'

To contact CDC Tel: 061-351338 or e-mail: congocampaign@yahoo.com

Mr Michael Carmody, Director of Institute of Technology, Tralee; Dr Maria Hinfelaar, Director of Limerick Institute of Technology; Dr Peadar Cremin, President, Mary Immaculate College and Professor Don Barry, Vice President Academic & Registrar, University of Limerick



UL FF hits Brussels with a Bang

BRIAN FITZPATRICK,
DEREK DALY,
MARIA RECK

FEELING a little bit worse for wear at an ungodly hour on Monday fortnight last, the Con Colbert Cumann departed from Shannon Airport. The group was destined for Brussels, a city which has for centuries been at the crucible of European History; where chocolate flows in abundance and where a peculiar statue of a famous little lad stands mod-

estly attired and keen to show its contempt of any and all tourists.

Of course Brussels is also the home of the European project and the many institutions of the European Community. Thanks to the generosity of Brian Crowley MEP, who kindly arranged a tour of the European parliament and who took time out of his busy schedule to meet with them, the UL group experienced the sights, sounds and atmosphere of this remarkable institution. On the tour the

cumann saw the parliament chamber from the public gallery, many diplomats of world renown passing through the corridors and the quarters where the world's press compile and broadcast community news from the Parliament. The tour was in some ways slightly unorthodox. The allocated tour guide invited some unwanted attention from security when she attempted to demonstrate the harmony of the European Union through the medium of art. A metal structure symbolising the

unity and concord of the union and shaped like a maple leaf is erected in the hall where heads of state and dignitaries are received. She swung out of the structure and it rattled like wind chimes from the bottom floor right to the top to disturb the deliberating of this august gathering of diplomats. Members of the cumann followed 'Greggy' (guide No.2) and hid behind a stone column until security passed.

There was however, more than a political purpose to this trip and members of the cumann split into two groups to spend an afternoon touring the city centre and the many cultural and historical landmarks that Brussels has to offer. On Tuesday afternoon five members took a 'hop on, hop off' bus tour that piped in ambient Barry White classics

between each tourist hot spot. After almost two hours of the walrus of love the UL delegation felt that enough was enough. The cumann dined together that evening in the comfortable surrounds of a traditional Belgian restaurant. This was an opportunity to experience the world famous Belgian cuisine and hospitality. For those of the cumann who were not forgotten by the kitchen staff, the meal received mixed reactions.

The UL FF Cumann would like to thank all those who made the trip possible, in particular James Delaney and Gerry McCarthy for their hospitality and to Brian Crowley for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet the UL delegation.

An Focal Briefs

Tragic accident outside front gate

A tragic accident outside the University's front gate on Wednesday Week 4 claimed the life of a cyclist. The woman, identified as 31 year old French native Nadia Lescuier, was believed to have been cycling from work at Cook Ireland when she was knocked from her bicycle by a truck. The truck was reversing out the gates of a building site adjacent to the Castletroy Park Hotel. It is not known whether the driver of the truck has been charged with any offence.

Car broken into in pay carpark

A car left overnight last Saturday in the pay car park was broken into, with the back window and the locked glove compartment smashed in. An I Pod was stolen from the vehicle. The student, who reported the matter to the Students' Union, was unsatisfied with the lack of security in the car park, particularly as security officers had not noticed the break-in until he reported it to them. ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey has promised to follow up the issue within the University.

Ógra Fianna Fáil Table Quiz

The Con Colbert Cumann of Ógra Fianna Fáil held a table quiz Wednesday week 3 at the Arena Sports Bar. Following the defeat of the Irish soccer team people were in low spirits but they soon rallied round each other to complain of the difficulty level of the questions. It was well attended and 11 teams were represented. In the end the team named "Paddy the Plasterer" won out and received a prize sponsored by Cumann Secretary Máire O'Donoghue; as well as meal vouchers for the Arena Sports Bar. There was a tie for second and third place, sorted by a competition between a representative of each team. Katie Harrington duly "downed" her pint of lemonade first and "€3 a Strip" were declared second place team and "Bray Harriers" came in third. 2nd prize was 4 tickets for Trinity rooms; sponsored by Cumann Treasurer Derek Daly. Third place was €25 cash.

A raffle was held for a DVD player and an MP3 CD player. Padraig Buckley won the DVD player and the Arena Sports Bar staff won the MP3 CD player. Overall a great night was had and we look forward to our next table quiz in the second semester.

Fianna Fáil meetings are held every Monday at 6pm in the Students Union. All are welcome.

ULSU ENT'S
 AGNTAS NAMAC LÉINN
 Oileárait i gColáiste

CALLING ALL ENGINEERING STUDENTS!!

DO YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COLLEGE DAY?

DO YOU WANT TO REPRESENT YOUR YEAR IN THE HUMAN TABLE FOOTBALL COMPETITION?

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE WACKY 'BEAUTY' CONTEST'?

TALK TO YOUR CLASS REP TODAY!

ULSU ENT'S
 AGNTAS NAMAC LÉINN
 Oileárait i gColáiste

UL DEBATING UNION

Tuesday Week 6-
Costume Debate
'Do looks matter?'
7p.m. in B1023

Speaker
development
Monday week 6 in
An Phluais

Postgraduate News

Hi Everyone,

Success

I am very happy to inform you that there are people interested in getting involved with the PSA and they are running for the PSA Exec positions. I will give you names in the next edition of An Focal. It is great to have a team of people who are willing to work hard. I am very proud to tell you that Babystitter's project is a great success and both Sinead and I got about 50 emails from babysitters. At the moment we are working on the promotion campaign in the city of Limerick and among UL staff. That is the first of my campaign promises that I managed to fulfil.

MA and PhD students

I would like to get a feedback from the MA and PhD students concerning problems they encounter while doing their research and working on their thesis. I am really interested in the way the system works for you. Let me know how you are getting on and what are the obstacles that you find the most difficult to deal with.

Time to relax

I am planning a couple of socials for this semester and if you have any ideas or suggestions do not hesitate to contact me. As the Welcome party was very successful I was planning of organizing a similar evening in the common room with some healthy snacks and an interesting guest. I already spoke to Patsy Ryan who is a Career Advisor for both postgrads and mature students. We are considering running two sessions, one more

general about the prospect employment options after graduation and the other one more specific aiming at the international postgrads who will be seeking employment in Ireland. If you are interested in either of them just give me a call.

Multi-Cultural Day

I am looking for people interested in organizing the multi-cultural day. If you are proud of your nationality, and would like to share your national heritage with others plus you can cook, email me. I was thinking of celebrating Multi-Cultural Day around Christmas time so we all have a plenty of time to prepare (learn to cook).

Contact me

Some of you have probably tried to reach me and found it rather difficult. As your representative I attend many committee meetings discussing your postgrad issues and sometimes these meeting take almost an entire day. That is why I decided to make my Calendar public so you know where I am and when I am going to be back. Just check the Calendar attached to my door. I think this will help you get in touch with me. However, if you have an urgent query and I am not available please do not hesitate contacting one of the SU officers.

PSA WWW

I have finally found one postgrad who will be editing our website so the information will be updated and reliable. I also took care of the mailing list as I know there were some problems with signing up to it. It should soon be running smoothly.



Other

I am planning to make some changes in the common room in order to make it a more pleasant place to be in. However, I will definitely need a lot of help from postgrads who use it, especially at lunch time. Considering the amount of students who want to relax and eat their meal there it would be highly appreciated if you would clean up after yourselves as others want to use the same dishes to have their own lunch. Nobody likes cleaning up after others and I do not think it's too much to ask of you.

AGM

On Thursday 26th of October during the AGM meeting postgrads elected John Velasco - Deputy President, Siobhan NiChathain - Events Officer, Eimear Spain - Treasurer and Cian Davis went for Class Rep. Congratulations to all. The PSA members also passed the PSA Constitution with the few amendments made by former President Maria Mc Hale.

Talk to you soon.

Ps. Keep an eye out for the posters and info about the upcoming events.

Ciorcal Cómhra



Tá **Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge** á eagrú ag Cumann Gaelach NGÓ, Ollscoil Luimnigh. Beidh comhrá ar siúl gach seachtain idir cairde le Gaeilge. **Tabhair leat do chúpla focal agus tabharfaidh muid cupán tae, briosaí agus comhlúadar duit** - bring your little bit of Irish and we'll provide the company, cuppas and biccies!

Cén lá? **Gach Céadaoin Wednesdays**
Cén t-am? **6 a chlog 6 o'clock**
Cén áit? **Tolglann na Gaeilge, Aontas na Mac Léinn Irish Lounge, Students' Union**

Tá fáilte roimh gach duine le suim sa Ghaeilge, is cuma cén leibhéal comhrá atá agat. Is bealach iontach é an ciorcal seo le bhur gcuid Ghaeilge a fheabhsú, go háirithe má tá staidéar á dhéanamh agaibh uirthi mar ábhar ollscoile. Beidh deis agat bualadh le daoine nua le Gaeilge agus cúpla cara nua a dhéanamh freisin!



Students' Union AGM

DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

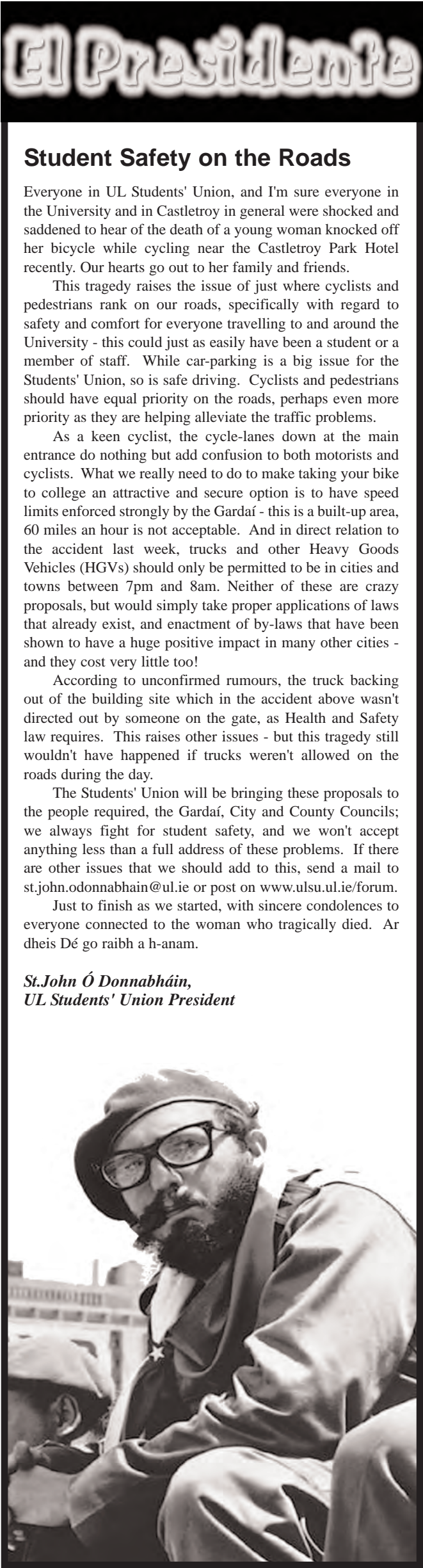
THE Students' Union AGM will take place on Wednesday Week 7 in the Stables. The quorum for a general meeting of the Union is 200 members, meaning that no decisions can be made at the meeting if less than 200 members are present.

The meeting will be held at 6pm so as to attract the maximum amount of attendees. In order to dispel the formality of the occasion free food and refreshments will be on offer. Such issues as a proposal to investigate re-affiliating to USI and the ongoing car parking campaign will be up for discussion.

Last year's UGM (second semester general meeting) was the first

quorate meeting in over 3 years, and resulted in a raft of changes, notably a new constitution which included the introduction of a fifth sabbatical officer and a pay increase for the sabbatical officers. It also led to the establishment of a Commission of Arbitration for internal disputes and the abolition of the position of Student Teacher Officer.

In the past this has led to serious problems such as accounts not being approved and unopposed officers never being ratified. Both the Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey and the Community Relations Officer Katie Harrington must be ratified by general meeting this year as both were unopposed.



Student Safety on the Roads

Everyone in UL Students' Union, and I'm sure everyone in the University and in Castletroy in general were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of a young woman knocked off her bicycle while cycling near the Castletroy Park Hotel recently. Our hearts go out to her family and friends.

This tragedy raises the issue of just where cyclists and pedestrians rank on our roads, specifically with regard to safety and comfort for everyone travelling to and around the University - this could just as easily have been a student or a member of staff. While car-parking is a big issue for the Students' Union, so is safe driving. Cyclists and pedestrians should have equal priority on the roads, perhaps even more priority as they are helping alleviate the traffic problems.

As a keen cyclist, the cycle-lanes down at the main entrance do nothing but add confusion to both motorists and cyclists. What we really need to do to make taking your bike to college an attractive and secure option is to have speed limits enforced strongly by the Gardaí - this is a built-up area, 60 miles an hour is not acceptable. And in direct relation to the accident last week, trucks and other Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) should only be permitted to be in cities and towns between 7pm and 8am. Neither of these are crazy proposals, but would simply take proper applications of laws that already exist, and enactment of by-laws that have been shown to have a huge positive impact in many other cities - and they cost very little too!

According to unconfirmed rumours, the truck backing out of the building site which in the accident above wasn't directed out by someone on the gate, as Health and Safety law requires. This raises other issues - but this tragedy still wouldn't have happened if trucks weren't allowed on the roads during the day.

The Students' Union will be bringing these proposals to the people required, the Gardaí, City and County Councils; we always fight for student safety, and we won't accept anything less than a full address of these problems. If there are other issues that we should add to this, send a mail to st.john.odonnabhain@ul.ie or post on www.ulsu.ul.ie/forum.

Just to finish as we started, with sincere condolences to everyone connected to the woman who tragically died. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam.

St.John Ó Donnabháin,
UL Students' Union President

Letters to the editor

An Focal, UL Students' Union, UL, Castletroy, Limerick.
Phone 061 202363, Fax 061 213476, Email deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie

An Focal will endeavour to accommodate all letters as far as legally possible. All parties have a right of reply to letters printed herein.

Law graduations

Madam,

Reading Fiona Kehily's letter published in the edition of 3rd October gave rise to some mixed emotions. Primarily I would like to congratulate Fiona on having graduated, and to wish her all the very best for the next step in her life. I remember Fiona well, and I am sure she will do her alma mater proud as she moves through her chosen career. I was also glad to see that she put pen to paper because she felt strongly enough about something. I feel it is very important to have the courage of one's convictions. I hope she will retain this strength of character.

A gentle tip, however, in relation to the thrust of her argument. I would hope that, as she moves through life, she will do her homework, thoroughly, before putting pen to paper. I am sure that she will come to realise that all of us are balancing commitments and that sometimes not all the desired outcomes (being present for students throughout the summer and at summer graduation) are possible. Winter graduation is another opportunity to meet students. Has she considered, I wonder, that some of us spend the summer on campus, that there are other demands on our time, other students who need to be motivated, to be helped to meet an end of August submission deadline? Has she checked the UL calendar, and noticed that in June there were exam related boards, in July there were student status committee meetings, script viewing days, grade rechecks and in August Academic Council? Did she think of the other committees/bodies meeting during July/August? Apart from these there were tears to be wiped, panic references to be written - "needed last week" (very often requested without any CV or details as to 'why'), conferences to be attended or even organised, and one's own academic garden to be tended. Suddenly it was repeat exam time, and then annual leave beckoned. I tend to take annual leave after the repeat exams so that I can start the semester refreshed, and I know that others do/did as well.

I don't think Fiona's reference to 'disinterest' could be said to reflect the reality - quite the contrary. For my part, when Fiona next visits her alma mater, I hope she will get in touch, and we can enjoy a coffee together and speak of old and new times. I look forward to hearing that she is making the progress she would wish and is building on her time at UL. I will make sure to have my camera with me, to record the happy event.

Best wishes to the editorial team at an Focal,

Patricia Conlan

Response to Motormouth

Madam,

God, there I was eating a big bowl of oats in the morning when I picked up last week's An Focal and came across the article about car parking from the Motormouth. After spraying the kitchen wall and my Chuck Norris poster with laughter and oats I've been compelled to write. Right, here we have a young man, fit and healthy who lives within walking distance of UL but chooses to drive because as he says "It's cold and wet" ahh bless him. God be with the days when my mother would send me off down the road to primary school armed with an Aran sweater and a rain coat. When I protested and said I'll don't like the rain she would say "You're Irish love, we don't mind the rain. We're used to it and it makes us feel alive."

Mr Mouth I'll struggle to imagine a world run by yourself but here it goes... Well firstly we wouldn't need to go to lectures because they would come to us. Our lecturers would be the ones who get cold and wet and if they complain we'll send them packing out the door so we can watch more Dr Phil or Dallas. If you did have to go to college (dread the thought), it would be a drive in lecture were you don't even have to get out of your car. You can sit in peace in the comfort of your own motor, take notes and wait till McDonalds bring your order. You can drive to the stables and if you pick up (dread the thought) you can bunk up in the back seat and tell her the size of your alloy wheels.

And then I go No feck imagining this, there are other ways. The likes of MotorMouth can get off their fat lazy asses and walk. If he afraid of the cold and wet I'm sure my mother can knit him a nice Aran sweater and give him a lovely pink rain jacket. He can leave the house and shout to the sky to an already deaf God 'but I'm a student and I can't be arsed'. Where does being a student gives you free licence to be a lazy _ _ _ _ _? (Please feel free to fill in the blanks).

My heart really goes out to those who really need to drive in here, those who live miles away and need the spaces. I think the college can think up of a way to prioritise for the people who live far away thus need to drive. These people come here after a long stressful journey and I think the last thing they need is to have to play chicken with people who live around the corner. I also think of those who have to wait in the rain for a bus for ages and the only shelter they have is a one that holds about 6 people, a golden Labrador and a duck. When it's raining Darwin's theory of natural selection comes into place. (Perhaps we can have a game to see how many people can fit inside that place. You never know it may be like the Tardis in Dr. Who or Bosco's box). UL needs to address these issues sooner rather than later in my view.

I can imagine you're reading this "but what about my game of chicken with women so I can feel like a real man?" I bet you wouldn't try it with one of the munster rugby team. Well if you're in need of a game I've one for you. It involves me meeting you at the main gate were I tell you that if you don't want UL ' being one big car park' get your motor back up the road, Park it and walk to college.. It's a new game that we all can play... It's called common sense

I have to ask Mr MotorMouth does he realise petrol is not a beverage that is drunk first thing in the morning? Yes I think its important that people have a place to park and Yes I think that people like him who " live within walking distance" do just that and ...WALK. You point out you've been in college for five years so you should know the way. While you walk along the way use my mantra "I'm Irish...I don't mind the rain. I'm used to it and its makes me feel alive" It helped me when I was boy of eight, I'm sure it'll help a grown up like yourself.

Matthew Organ
Part of the 'tree hugging' Environmental Soc



It has all kicked off again on the exciting 'Events' mailing list. The 'car parking' list as it is called by those in the know had lain dormant for a few weeks but a notice from the SU to advise staff of a secret gathering to plot the overthrow of the Governing Authority or some such rebellious undertaking was all it took to rekindle the embers. The progressive development of the tit for tat exchange had us expecting someone to say 'your ma' at some point and bring an end to it all.

Into the mix were thrown issues around how 'free parking is subsidised parking' and €2/€3 per day is just less subsidised parking, others wondered if other private sector employers charge employees for parking. Then El Presidente made the mistake of trying to raise the tone of the debate by stating that 'It's a pity that people don't read properly before they respond.' Well, that was just baiting the pipe smoking bear in a tweed jacket. After that the conspiracy theorists were out telling us that 'Many of the people who park in this car-park are not employees of the university, but they park here and get the bus into town' I'm not sure how much of a sucker someone would have to be to drive into UL, leave their car here for the light-fingered, and then hang about waiting on the promise of a bus. Next up the denizens of Briarfield and Curragh Birin were singled out for not taking the walking option. I suspect the person who raised the possibility of walking hasn't had to spend too many days steaming about the campus after getting drenched on a twenty minute walk in. Wet jeans can really chaff one in quite tender places. Most of the estates close to the campus are not serviced with buses and it is worth noting the college is trying to weasel out of providing money for the already limited nitelink service.

Then El Pres was subject to a tirade about the dangers of UL becoming 'Beverly Hills 90210', though if the staff member were really with it they might have given the shout out to the O.C. or One Tree Hill. His eco-warrior credentials were queried with a suggestion that 'Students should be actively discouraged to use cars by the SU....Any eco-conscious student president' should do this. This was followed with a main course of the four Yorkshire men routine from Monty Python finished off with a side salad of Myles Na gCopaleen told how not ten years ago the speaker had gotten to college fine '...by bicycle, bus, or whatever alternative mode of transport(including, dare I say it....walking!) If cars (also subsidised in most cases by parents), are "de rigueur" accessories for the student population, the 'beal bocht' attitude simply doesn't wash.'

We finished up with the Orwellian reminder that 'we are not all equal in this world', which is pretty choice coming from the cultural studies department! We were told a sorry tale of 'faculty who (given the normal demographic) are older, have health issues etc, and are not able to carry heavy bags of books from far-flung areas of the campus to their offices' I could barely hold back the tears as I pictured wizened thirty something's with a band of Sherpas braving the rain covering the many miles from the back of the Schuman to the main building. Of course students do not have warm offices to recover in, or store their heavy books or sit and have some hot cocoa.

Finally, we were informed nettles have remained ungrasped (perhaps because they sting, and make quite poor soup?), leadership has been failing all over the place and that the abolition of fees is to blame! Well, what with all the poor eyesight and bad backs amongst the staff I'm surprised we have any leadership at all.

If you have any curios or gossip you'd like to spill let us know at thethroat@gmail.com

All We Are Is Dust in the Wind

A Tribute to Darren McHugh, 2nd Year Woodwork Teaching

HE gave the best hugs and had the heartiest of laughs. He welcomed everyone into his wide circle of friends and was the kind of man you could grow close to within an incredibly short space of time. He had a great sense of humour, a quality that drew many people close to him, and he left a lasting impression on everyone he met. He had a knack of being the best brother, son, cousin, cuddler, musician, teacher in every sense of the word, and above

all, friend. Darren McHugh was one of those very special people you are lucky to meet once or twice in a lifetime and, although he lost his life in a tragic accident this summer, the amount of people who travelled to show their love and appreciation of him at his funeral was a measure of the person he was and the impact he had on our lives, even as a young man of only nineteen years. We miss him beyond belief.

But Darren grasped the transience of life and therefore the importance of enjoying every moment, of grasping every opportunity, of always making the most of life when he was alive. He believed completely in the theory that

what goes around comes around and he strove to live life to its fullest in an attempt to only generate the best karma for himself and those around him. His warmth, his amazing guitar playing and somewhat less successful attempts at singing along will never be forgotten! He appreciated everything he had been blessed with in life, loving his two years in UL and valuing his family and friends above all else. And so, despite the pain and searing grief we are feeling, we know that his spirit is still with us, telling us to dry our tears for it is **Time for the healing to begin**. We have memories galore of you Darren, and through us you will live forever. We will be

telling stories of your shenanigans for aeons to come, never fear my dear! Until we meet again, we will try to remember that **All we are are dust in the wind, Nothing lasts forever, but the earth and sky** and that we should draw inspiration from your enthusiasm and love of life. We'll try not to **hang on** too much.

*There is a Book of Condolences for Darren in the Students' Union and a memorial mass will be held in the **Contemplative Centre** on Friday the **10th of November** at 7.30pm. Members of his family will be in attendance and all friends are welcome.*



Darren McHugh, who died tragically during the summer

UpcLose ...with Dr. Naomi Birdthistle

Name: Dr Naomi Birdthistle

Age (if you're brave enough to admit it!): 35

Relationship status: living with partner

Job/Course and Department: Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Course leader for the Graduate Diploma/Masters in Entrepreneurship Management

Birthplace: Limerick

Describe yourself in five words: outgoing, constantly talking, funny, caring, hard working

Why did you come to UL? Did my masters here and in 1999 I decided to leave my job in Limerick and go back full-time as a PhD.

Your favourite thing about UL: the view from my office! I am in the Schuman building and I have the most amazing view of the fountains .

Your least favourite thing about UL: the race to get a parking space!

Favourite place to eat in UL: my office as I bring in my own lunch - though the scones in the Schuman building are lovely in the morning.

Three interesting facts about you: my unusual family background - we run Funderland in the RDS so I did not have a traditional childhood. My parents house blew up December 30th 2003 due to a gas explosion - so you could say the earth moved from them on the last day of 2003! I love to talk about the area of family businesses as this is my area of expertise.

Your motto for life: work hard as the fruits of your labour will eventually pay off.

Call for student estate security

TRACY LYNCH

IT'S Week 5, and we've all just about settled back into college life after our hectic summers; back to lectures, friends and the madness that is the Castletroy nightlife!! However, these short few weeks of our first semester have brought a new distress to UL student's minds. Last week saw the second attack on a UL student in the same housing estate; he was mugged and then assaulted. A few weeks previous a first year student was the victim of a similar attack. Both of these attacks took place in Elm Park, a place that used to be known for its abundance of students and parties!! At least half of the third and fourth year students today can say they lived in Elm Park at some stage of their college life, and I'm sure most of them will tell you they had a great time there; I did! But this semester has seemed to have brought a change to the area and these past few weeks have shown us that it is not safe to be walking through

the area alone at night, for males or females.

These problems and warnings are not just for Elm Park though. The two attacks that have been reported, and possibly the most serious ones, were in that estate. However, there have been various minor instances in surrounding estates that have not been reported involving students. Most of these have occurred in the early hours after nightclubs and with drink involved, some have been provoked, some haven't. But they are also happening in the evening time, involving harassment and snide comments.

So what's to be done about this? As we all know there is very little Garda presence around UL and Castletroy. Campus security stays on campus, so what good is that to the other half of the student population that live in private estates? The guards and the University need to realise that the population of Castletroy is growing every year as UL becomes a bigger and more popular choice for

students. It's no surprise that students go out, not much is going to stop us from having a good time, not even this new threat. So this means there's a need for us to be careful and vigilant on our nights out. American campus' and their surrounding student estates are all equipped with emergency buttons, when pressed there is a direct connection to campus security with an automatic response. These buttons provide a safety for students and hold serious fines for misuse. Is it time for Irish colleges to provide these measures? If recent events are anything to go by then the answer is clearly yes. But until then, a few simple measures can help you be safe: Never walk home alone from the pub or club, stick with your friends on nights out or arrange to meet outside the club to go home together, keep an eye out for anyone you see on their own who could be vulnerable to attacks and don't hesitate to report any suspicious behaviour in your own estates!

STUDENT SPEAK : *What do you think of Brown Thomas?*



Eugene Grisewood,
2ND year Software Design
'He reminds me of my father. In
the way he won't speak to me'.



Darragh Walsh,
1st year Law and European Studies
'Check those pins!!'

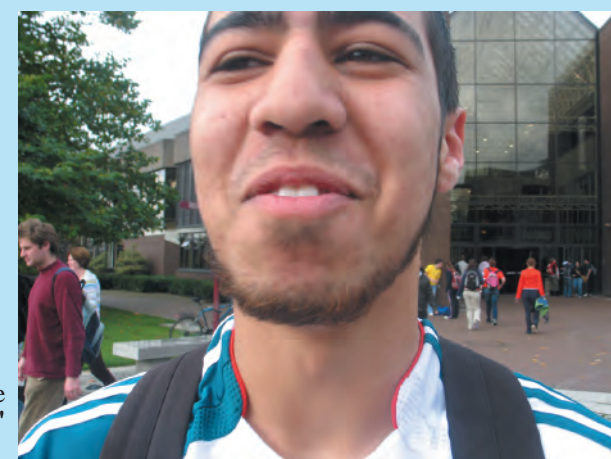
Damien Houlihan,
1st Year Law and
European Studies
'My name is Damien'



Paddy Mannix,
1st Year English and
History
'He's a sex symbol'



Anna Salduskina, Erasmus
'He's lonely. Id like to spend more
time with him.'



Matt Damon, 1st year Equine Science
'I'm too gorgeous to care.'



Michaela Kiely, 1st year Music, Media and
Performance Technology
'He looks like a man trapped in Big Foot's con-



Brown Thomas
'I'm starting a gang. Give it time...'



Mark 'sparky' Maloney and Paddy Peterson,
1st Year English and History
'We tell him our secrets.'

The Students' Union Executive - *what do they really do?*



BY NIAMH CLOWRY

WITH week six of the semester now upon us, the Executive of the Students Union for the current academic year has now been finalised following the elections of the Equality Officer, the Community Relations Officer and a new Chairperson of the Class Reps Council.

The executive of the Union is composed of twelve voting officers, the President St.John

O'Donnabhain, Welfare Officer Sinead Hickey, Education Officer Alan Higgins, Campaigns and Services Officer Alannah Turner, Publicity and Publications Officer Deirdre O'Shaughnessy, Community Relations Officer Katie Harrington, Equality Officer Niamh Coleman, Chairperson of Class Reps Council Steve O'Brien, Council Officers Colleges Rep Sean Kelly, Clubs Officer Maeve Burke,

Societies Officer Judith Lynch, and Postgraduate Student Association Executive Nominee Maja Niebrzegowska.

There are also two non-voting members of the Executive, First year rep William Rotte, and Secretary General Karen Ryan MacNamara.

The executive was set up under the terms of the Constitution of the Students Union and represents the

views of the students of the University of which the access to education is of the utmost importance, as a right and not a privilege. The executive is composed of a wide group of people in order to encompass the views of a cross section of the student population. Under the Constitution of the Union, exec must meet at least ten times per semester. Exec has the authority to initiate policy and present it to Class Reps Council and also acts as

Treasurer to the Union.

Below is an introduction to all members of the current Executive. Many will already know the Sabbatical Officers, however all officers of the exec have a role to play, thus it is essential to the student population of UL to familiarise themselves with the officers of the exec and their respective roles.

Name: St.John Ó'Donnabháin

Position: President of the Students' Union

Course studied: 4 long (but happy) years of HPSS

Why you wanted the job: I think the SU has loads of potential to make a difference for students and with them on millions of issues.

Best thing about it: Working with enthusiastic and really committed people

Worst thing about it: The University works really slowly when it wants to.

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Get every single student involved in the SU - then we'd get whatever we wanted : SO GET INVOLVED!!!

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?: Yep, the Nitelink has been ensured for another year; An Phluis has been very successful as a venue for Clubs and Socs, and is in the process of being opened as a Pub venue for next semester; there's been lots more events happening on campus; making the SU more visible around the campus.

Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I'm an environmental activist, saving the planet and all that.
2. I'm a feminist.
3. My purple SU hoodie brings out my beautiful blue eyes(!)

Your motto: "Better to regret doing something, than to regret not doing it"



Name: Sinéad Hickey

Position: Deputy President/Welfare Officer

Course studied: HPSS

Why you wanted the job: I thought I'd be good at it and knew I would enjoy working in the SU

Best thing about it: Being able to help people

Worst thing about it: Long hours maybe.

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:

Take over the world....! Only kidding, set up a dedicated Sexual Health Clinic, 5 days a week, opening hours 9-5pm

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?

Yes, I initiated a Mental Health Awareness Week, currently setting up the Peer Support Network and on the way to organising SHAG week.

Three interesting facts about yourself: I don't think these are probably the most interesting facts but anyway here we go....

1. Want to do a Masters in Social Work next year
2. I injured myself while skiing in the Rocky Mountains and now have an indefinite fear of skis.
3. I want to visit Peru more than anywhere else in the world

Your motto: You've only one life - live it as best you can.



Name: Deirdre O' Shaughnessy

Position: Publications and Publicity Officer

Course studied: Law & European Studies (Sociology & French)

Why you wanted the job: I was involved in the Union since day one as a class rep and an An Focal writer. I wanted to see if I could do the job and do it well, and I wanted to continue the process of improving An Focal that has been ongoing for the last couple of years. I'm interested in pursuing journalism and I figured that with, together with my interest in the Union, they would be a good combination. I've always been a 'notice-box' (thanks Mam!) so the PR side appealed to me too!

Best thing about it: Being able to promote positive things that UL students do and show that students aren't the smelly layabouts of common perception. Most students are very hard working people and most juggle a lot of different things, be it part time work, Clubs and Societies or college work, and there's no recognition for that.

Worst thing about it: The long hours and never being off duty. You're a representative no matter where you are or who you're talking to, and students don't work office hours so they don't expect us to either. The paper takes a lot of time the weeks it's being produced, so an ordinary office day is like a half day!

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: I would love to see a weekly paper, because it's very frustrating that the news in An Focal isn't always new! And a lot of the sports stuff in particular can be totally obsolete by the time the paper comes out, so that's an issue. I've looked at the situation though, and it would probably mean the end of Review, and having to get some part-time paid staff... not really a possibility at the moment, but I will be looking at it again and seeing if it's workable.

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? Hmmm... let me look at my manifesto and check! I have carried out C&S PROs workshops, and included all the Irish articles I could find in both An Focal and Review. I have brought a 'Know Your Rights' section to An Focal and brought a greater student focus to the paper (I think!). I've published the wallplanner I promised and introduced the new sections to Review. Along with the urlSU committee, I'm working on an online radio/podcasting project, and I spent much of the summer researching this.

Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I have a bad hip (I wish I was joking)
2. I can wiggle my ears.
3. I'm an only child.

Your motto: Treat others as you would like to be treated, but don't expect them to do the same!



Name: Alan Higgins

Position: Vice President/Education Officer

Course studied: Public Administration (Class of '06)

Why you wanted the job:

I was aware that there was basic information out there that the majority of students' should know, but spent their four years not knowing. The main focus for my campaign and my year is to inform and highlight to students the information and supports that are or should be available to them. Information is power, and hopefully armed with the right information students' can make their academic experience as painless as possible.

Best thing about it:

When you know that your actually helping students, its not something that you always see. Also when you feel like you actually are making a difference or have the potential to do so-the pain relieving after hitting your head off the wall of University bureaucracy and politics.

Worst thing about it:

The meeting, oh the meetings-some of them are long, boring, but infuriatingly necessary and a few weeks for example I was actually scheduled to be in three places at once! I have asked the since and engineering class reps to look into creating some sort of devise where I can split myself in two (or more).

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:

End the perception that Students don't realise what is happening to them academically when their in University and some how despite having the intelligence to get into college that they don't have the intelligence to make a valid contribution to their learning experience. 18-23 year old students are obviously different from 18-23 year old in the rest of society.

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?

Yes, the Grinds list (visit www.ulsu.ul.ie/noticeboards) has been established and I have just recently completed a very successful class reps training which I hope to build on.

Meanwhile efforts have begun on all the other campaign targets.

Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I lived in Australia for ten years and I am a proud holder of two passports.
2. I have a habit of loosing things and finding them again weeks later, for example said two passports!
3. I'm a Chief Scout Award Holder.

Your motto: The only person you can compare yourself with is you.



Name: Alannah Turner

Position: Campaigns and Services Officer

Course studied: Public Administration

Why you wanted the job: I wanted to get more involved in the union. I had seen what a great job previous sabbats had done and wanted to build on that. I wanted this position because I love giving out and the University always does something stupid enough to warrant a good rant!!

Best thing about it: The rants!

Worst thing about it: The long hours.

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Get rid of all the stupid people who work in the University!

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? Yes. I have planned an environmental awareness campaign for this semester. We are currently running a car parking campaign. A complaints procedure was drafted by last year's education officer and I am continuing the talks with the University about implementing it. The SU courtyard has been used more this year, the ents in orientation week and week 1 helped this. The second hand bookshop has been put up on-line. Different events are held in the Monnet nearly every Wednesday night.

Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I spent 6 months in South America.
2. I used to be a gymnast.
3. I can crack a crazy amount of bones in my body!

Your motto: Take life as it comes.



Name: Maja Niebrzegowska

Position: PSA President

Course studied: MA English Language Teaching

Why you wanted the job: Great experience and I have done similar things in the past, back in my college years. It's a great job for a starter. It is self directed and definitely very creative.

Best thing about it: Money...You get to know a lot of people and attend different events like conferrings, when you have to wear a rob and a hat and you stand up, put a hat on and then sit down and take it off for each PhD awarded at the ceremony.

Worst thing about it: Hmm...Lack of time. Taking work home.

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: I wish I could teach some postgrads to keep the common room tidy. Seriously, bring research and taught postgrads together. At the moment they are separated in many aspects.

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?

Yes. Babysitters club. I started with an idea and soon teamed up with Sinead, SU Welfare. Together we managed to get about 50 people interested in babysitting. We publicised the project in local newspapers as well as among UL staff and at the moment we are waiting for the outcome. I think it is very successful.

Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I love dancing, watching old movies and travelling.
2. I don't tolerate smoking people in my house.
3. I am one of the very few Polish people in Ireland. We are as rare as snow in Ireland.

Your motto: The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer. Read it somewhere and liked it.



Name: Katie Harrington

Position: Community Relations Officer

Course studied: New Media and English, 2nd year

Why you wanted the job: I wanted to get more involved with the Student's Union

Best thing about it: Being involved in discussions and decisions that really effect students

Worst thing about it: Meetings that clash with other stuff I do like debating

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Get permanent residents and students to live side by side in peace and harmony

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? I didn't make any!

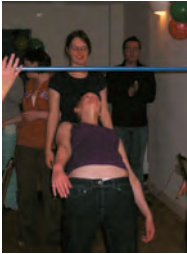
Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I like tea

2. I'm involved in An Cumann Gaelach, the Debating Union and writing for An Focal

3. I made it to week 5 this semester before going to the Lodge (achievement!)

Your motto: "In a minute there is time for decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse"



Name: Niamh Coleman.

Position: Equality Officer

Course studied: International Insurance and European Studies (Economics and Spanish).

Why you wanted the job: Although I was never involved with the Union until this year I decided that there should be a bit more to college life than just going through the normal run of the mill stuff. Student politics was not on my agenda until I realised that there was still two non-sabbatical offices to be filled through the process of nomination and election. Of these two Equality Officer was the one that appealed to me the most because I felt that I could really exercise my potential to the fullest in this role. I wanted to challenge myself. I'd like to think that during the next coming year I'll be able to make life a little easier on campus for anyone who is facing equality issues.

Best thing about it: So far the best thing about the job is the positive feedback I've been getting from students and staff alike on the importance of equality issues within the campus and its extending community. The students have been great with coming up with ideas on how to make UL equality friendly and the staff have been great in listening to those ideas and trying to implement them. Besides that I'm really enjoying the job and looking forward to the coming few weeks.

Worst thing about it: If there was one thing that really gets to me I would have to say it is the red tape and bureaucracy that is involved in making any changes. This is essential to maintain the efficient administration of the SU and the University. It's also vital to ensure there is transparency in any actions taken. It's just one of life's pains that you have got to get on with.

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: If I could make only one persons life easier I'd be delighted. However, I think the one thing I would change if I could would be to increase the County Council/VEC Maintenance Grant. As a student who benefits from this I know how invaluable this income is to a huge number of students. However with the cost of living rising, the grant (which is most welcome at over €3,000) falls short of taking into account the real cost of living and only recognises the nominal costs. If anything it would be ideal if this grant could somehow be index linked. With a general election just around the corner it is important for all students to make sure they are on the registrar and to voice their concerns with their local TD. Keep a look out for the Student Unions campaign on this issue over the next few weeks and months.

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? As of now I'm working on two of them. I'm hoping the Mature Society will be up and running by week 6. If there is anyone who would like to get involved in this please feel free to email me @ 0339377@student.ul.ie. Also I will be working closely with the Access Officer Denis Staunton over the next couple of months to ensure that all students are aware of the benefits of access before they enter the University.


Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I can touch my nose with my tongue (as seen in Class Rep Training)

2. I'm a closet Eurovision fan!

3. Being elected as Equality Officer is one of my proudest moments.

Your motto: Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.



Name: Steve O' Brien

Position: Chairperson of Class Reps Council

Course studied: Biomedical and Advanced Materials.

Why you wanted the job: So I can tell the sabbats to shut up! No, I've been a class rep for two years, I was in working groups and I was on the shop board so I thought this was a good step. I like to get involved

Best thing about it: I haven't done it yet so I can't tell you what the worst thing is... Call back in two weeks!

Worst thing about it: I haven't done it yet so I can't tell you what the worst thing is... Call back in two weeks!

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Get Council meetings down to an hour!

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? I made no promises so I've nothing to be held to! I didn't do it, nobody saw me, you can't prove anything!


Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I'm a tiler if you want a job done!

2. I work in the SU shop.

3. I'm going to Muse.

Your motto: Nollous Anxious (No Worries)



Name: Seán Kelly

Position: Education College Officer and Colleges nominee on Exec.

Course studied: P.E with Geography

Why you wanted the job: I wanted this job for many reasons but mainly for the "buzz" and that good feeling you get when you accomplish something big. The job seemed interesting and appealing. I get to meet lots of new people and get to know the layout of the college a lot better both from a student's perspective and staffs perspective. Hopefully by the end of my term I will have achieved something memorable. So now ye know why I wanted the job so badly!

Best thing about it: Meeting loads of new people and being in the "loop" of college life. Its great knowing things before anyone else knows.

Worst thing about it: Probably, the extra workload you have at the end of the day but I don't mind after all I drink lots of Lucozade sport and ye all know what that does to ya!

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: If only, If only I could be in charge of the engineering and science department I would create riots for a week. Competitions for best homemade firework, who can make the fastest go-kart, who can survive the longest in the wind tunnel comp etc. Ye get my drift, Brainaic UL style!

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? Well I'm filling this out so it's a start. No not yet but ask me before Xmas and hopefully I'll have more to say.


Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I really love travelling; anywhere it doesn't matter as long as it's mad and crazy.

2. I recently did skydiving and found it boring, only joking it was mad, I'd do it tomorrow if you asked me to jump out after 1c.

3. I'm a commis-chef so I know my way around the kitchen.

Your motto: Live life as if every day was your last!



Name: Judith Lynch

Position: Societies Officer

Course studied: Law and European Studies

Why you wanted the job: I love being involved in Societies and now its time to give something back. Together with the rest of the Clubs and Societies executive I hope to improve the financial position of societies on campus, and also consider additional resources and facilities required by Clubs and Societies as a whole.

Best thing about it: The satisfaction in getting something done and the great people I meet

Worst thing about it: The long hours preparing proposals and the early morning meetings!

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Fly! But as regards Clubs and Societies - Quadruple the pot so everyone can have as much money as they need.

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? Well I'll be bringing some discussion items to the next Clubs and Societies Council with regard to Budget reform - I promised to get things done, so I guess I'm on the right road.


Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I lived in France for 6 months before coming to College

2. I'm studying John Scottus Eriugena for my FYP - He was the guy on the old £5 note

3. I'm no longer Blonde - Brunettes have more fun anyway!

Your motto: "If you can't be good, be good at it!"



Name: Maeve Bourke

Position: Clubs Officer

Course studied: Science Education (or at least I'm trying to!)

Why you wanted the job: To help out all the clubs that will be displaced when the PESS building is knocked and to climb the ladder to becoming Supreme Leader of the World.

Best thing about it: Kicking all those YFG and OPC wasters off the computers in the C&S office when I have 'important' Clubs Officer business to do.

Worst thing about it: trying to learn all the rules and being expected to know EVERYTHING!

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Make the University move faster on bringing in accreditation for participation in Clubs and Societies. Everything in its own time I guess!

Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet? Ha ha ya like I had to campaign! They were begging for me!


Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. Some German people pronounce my name Meef which means smell and in case you hadn't noticed my surname begins with Bo....I blame the parents.

2. I'm Secretary and PRO with the Outdoor Pursuits Club as well as working in the SU Shop so when I shout "BUTTER OR MAYO??" to you from behind the deli counter it's only because I'm a little stressed!!

3. And finally to explain the picture, no I don't have an abusive boyfriend, I just got hit with a softball during practice last week! Black eyes are sooooo cool!!

Your motto: Rehab's for quitters.



Name: William Rotte

Position: First Year Rep

Course: P.E. Teaching with geography

Why you wanted the job:

● Wanted to be involved in the union from day one as I want to be involved in the university.

● Have an interest in how the union works.

● Students' council - discovered the benefits for students.

● Good way to get to know people.

● Good way to help freshers settle in.

Best thing about it:

● Allows freshers to make their concerns raised in council through me.


● Gives them a voice.

● Getting to know more people.

Worst thing about it:

● Being relied on by 3,500 people (apparently that's the number of freshers!!!!) to give them a voice, but I don't mind that too much (yet!)

The one thing you would do if only it was achievable: Find a way in which all new students can get to know each other outside of lectures, vis a vis classes where people from all different courses are mixed and given the opportunity to get to know people they wouldn't see in everyday class life.



Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?

● Not yet, as I haven't all the information on what I can/can't do.

● Not many people know I'm first year rep.

● I may not be in the job long

(William was elected first year rep before the class rep election within his class took place. He lost this election and is currently waiting to see if Class Reps Council will continue to endorse him as First Year Rep although he is not a class rep - Ed).

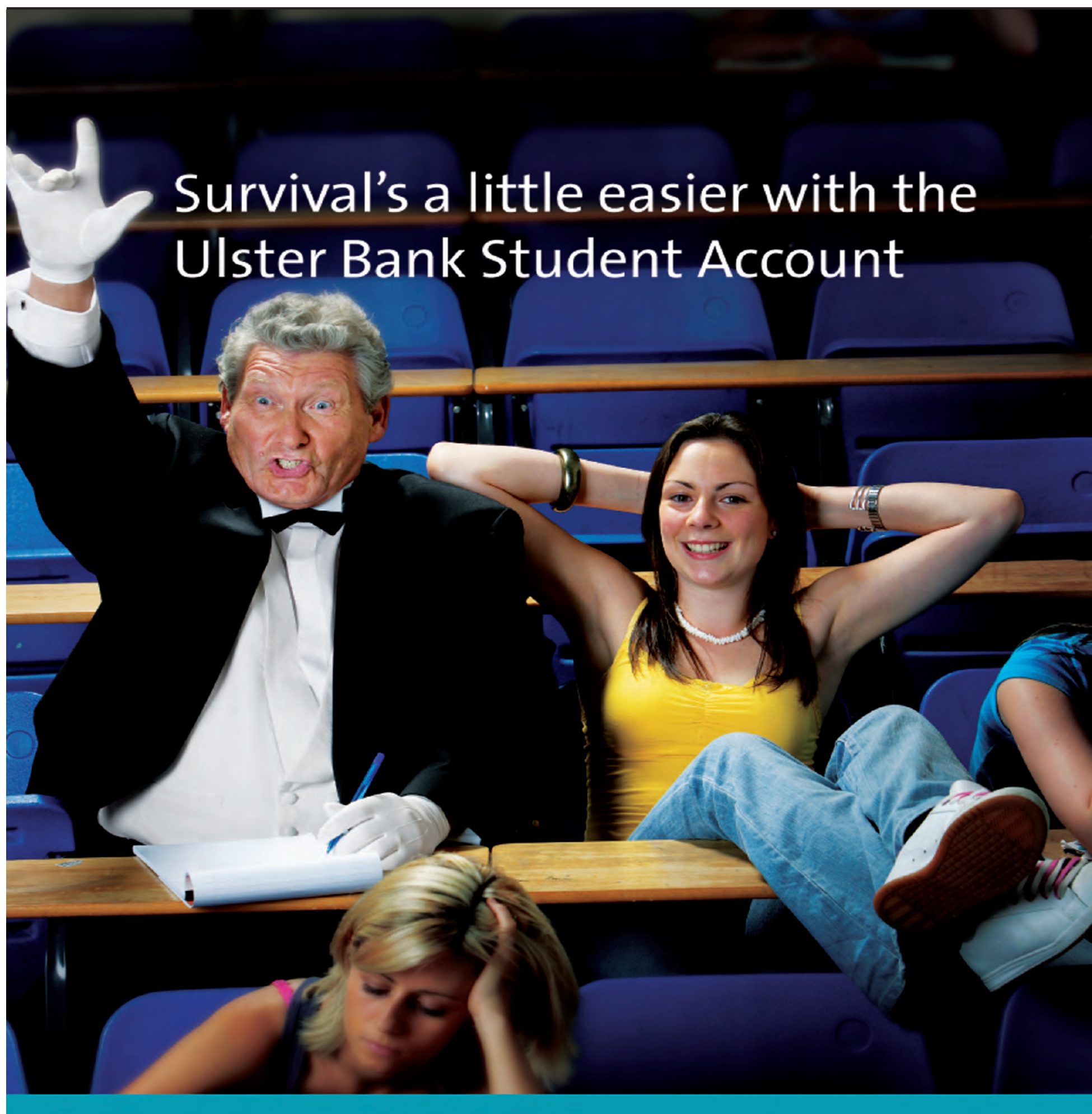
Three interesting facts about yourself:

1. I was a chronic asthmatic as a young child.

2. I have a brother living in Spain who attended UL.

3. I've lived in four countries.

Your motto: If anything is worth doing, it's worth doing well. You get back in life what you put into it, so why do a half-assed job?



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Education or Trade?

WHAT will you have to show for your stint here in the university? Way back when (in the days of eight inch floppy disks) I graduated with a computer science degree. It was a bit like learning all there was to know about a hammer - I came out bursting with knowledge about a tool, but with no idea what people wanted to do with it. My first experiences in the workplace were really frustrating, because no one seemed to know what they wanted to do with their computers.

Later on, I completed a Masters degree in telecommunications. This was a bit more like it. I learned how television worked and how telephones worked. I even got to understand how light shows should be synchronised with music.

But, again the main part of the exercise was to learn how to send voice and data from A to B.

At this stage, I'm doing a Ph.D. and, for the first time, I can say that a university programme has given me an education. My explanation for this is that I'm not faced with examinations every semester. When you study a technical subject, it is very easy to become wrapped up in it, to the exclusion of all else. During my M.Sc. days, I shared a house with a language student and a political science student. The former studied French by seducing all the French girls on campus and the latter spent hours watching current affairs on the T.V. as well as discussing politics in the pub. My wild student nights were spent with a book called "Information Trans-

mission, Modulation and Noise", trying to make sense of Fourier transformations.

If I were to rewind the clock, I think I would have made time for other things. As a professional software engineer, I've discovered that taking a break from a problem allows your sub-conscious mind have a go at it. Maybe the same would apply to study?

Even if this is not the case, employers these days are not as impressed by first class honours degrees as they used be. The workplace has become more team-based and my research is revealing that communication, collaboration and decision-support skills are as important today as technical ones. It is not much good being an expert in your particular field if you

cannot impart your knowledge to people who are not at the same technical level as you. As I discovered in my early days, you will have to deal with people who have totally different perspectives to you.

But, here in the university - the mini-universe - you will have the opportunity to develop these skills. You can get an education, as well as learning your trade. One word of advice though: if seducing French people appeals to you as a way of doing this, I would not recommend opening with: voulez vous coucher avec moi, se soir? It might work for Mick Jagger, but it sure doesn't work for m ... ahem, I mean everybody.

Irish People Love Being Drunk

AISSLING TALLIS

ACCORDING to a new survey by the Irish Health website, Irish drinkers consume 12.1 litres of pure alcohol per year.

A seminar on Irish drinking habits took place last week in Dublin. This seminar was organised by MEAS, the alcohol social responsibility organisation. The aim of this seminar was to explore the social and cultural aspects of alcohol.

Another study, another seminar... And what did they find out? They found that surprise, surprise Ireland is a drinking nation. We're not the only ones who drink large quantities (British drinkers consume 9litres of pure alcohol per year) we Irish are just trying to do it better than everyone else.

Why is the question on sociologists lips? What is it that is in the Irish psyche that insists that when we go for a few, it doesn't stop at three pints - the guideline set by the UN as the maximum you can drink before it is considered binge drinking. Instead we get ourselves into such a state that we can't do the simplest bodily functions, such as walk or talk.

The core of the problem is not that we are a drinking nation, but that we are a binge drinking nation. We live in a country where the large consumption of alcohol is the cornerstone for most social events. Celebratory and commiserating gatherings included.

So why do the Irish drink so much? It's obvious to the trained eye on a Thursday night outside Trainers- it's because Irish people love being drunk! We love the effects that drink has on us like no other nation. Do not get confused here; we do not like drink more than anyone else. We just enjoy its immediate effects more! Who can remember their first drink all those years ago outside a teenage disco...someone could have handed you paint stripper and you would have thought it was just as nice.

But long gone are those days for us hardened college drinkers. We have a much more mature attitude to alcohol now. Or do we?

So how many of us would say that we often drink more than 5units of alcohol is one session? How many of us drink more than 2 or 3 times a week? How many of us would think this is normal? Do we rate a good night on how drunk/sober we were?

Anthropologist Anne Fox, speaker at the MEAS seminar in Dublin, argues that alcohol does not completely alter our behaviour. It merely brings out the need in us to be part of a group, to feel human contact in much the same way that chimpanzees groom each other. We need physical contact. Her argument is that our society today is lacking the social constructs that a person needs to allow themselves to feel valued. We are increasingly isolated and that when we are drunk we can break the norms and receive the physical touch we crave.

One wonders does that physical contact include holding your friends hair back while she empties the contents of her stomach into a toilet. Is that the 21st century kind of grooming we are craving in our everyday lives??

What ever about the need to be loved that alcohol amplifies in us; maybe we like the way that alcohol can get us out of a number of situations (as well as into of course!).

We use it as an excuse to get away with behaviour that would not otherwise be tolerated. We often dismiss things the next morning as been down to the fact that we were drunk. Anthropologists try to tell us that drunken people have a high level of awareness of what they are doing. Perhaps we use being drunk as a licence to do or say things that we otherwise would not in the cold light of day. No repercussions as we were 'drunk' at the time.

We can all think of a time when the drunk excuse was used for someone's behaviour and at the back of your mind your thinking that the person was not as drunk as they let on. But friendships are worth more than a drunken argument.

In some situations it is possibly just the drink talking, but maybe another side to that is that what you think when your sober comes out when your drunk and you can use this magic "drunk license" the next morning. We care too much about what people think and their feelings that drink gives us the perfect opportunity to say and do exactly how we feel and think.

This is very profound analysis to what appears to be a simple question. But there is no simply answer to the Irish attitude towards drink.

Why do Irish people drink so much- maybe it is that we are afraid to say what we think, or maybe it is just that we love being drunk! Whichever way you look at the discussion the

fact remains that Irish drinkers drink a lot of alcohol. And that coupled with the horrifying statistic that 1 in 3 road deaths are alcohol related, maybe we all need to revise our attitude to

alcohol.

Cheers, mines a rum and coke... but just the one thanks!

Wellbeing

Question: DRUGS - are they really that bad??

Answer: Yes they are

USING drugs carries a range of physical and mental health risks and the only certain way to eliminate these is not to use any drugs at all. However, whether or not to take a particular drug is a personal choice. Whatever decision you decide to make about drugs, wherever you decide to draw your personal line in the sand, make sure this decision is based on factual information.

All drugs affect the user's judgment and probably reduce their inhibitions, increasing the likelihood that they might find themselves in situations they would normally avoid and which may be unsafe.

Many drugs have a high possibility of overdose causing death, for example ecstasy, heroin, cocaine.

Addiction, or dependence, is a high risk with drug use. Addiction can be physical

and/or psychological depending on the drug. Some drugs can create dependence much more quickly than others do.

The sale of fake or contaminated drugs is very common. When you buy a prescribed drug in a pharmacy, you are guaranteed that the medicine contains the right amount of the right drug. However, when you buy illegal drugs on the street you have no guarantee that what you are buying is what you think it is. This can increase the risk of overdose.

IF THINGS GO WRONG WITH DRUGS

First Aid

If somebody is totally freaking out or unable to cope with the effects of a drug, don't leave them alone. Reassure and make them feel secure. Find out what they are on and try to get them to do things to counteract the effects. Eating and drinking tend to reduce the effects of most drugs a little bit. If there aren't any physical dangers, sleeping it off may be a wise move.

If somebody is experiencing physical ill-effects from drugs, get medical help ASAP. Keep reassuring them and don't leave them alone if you can help it. Try to find out what they took, how much they have actually taken, how they took it: whether they ate it, injected it, smoked it or whatever, when they took it etc. It's often easier to get a clear answer to this from somebody who was with them. If they are unconscious, put them on their side make sure they can breathe, loosen tight clothing and so on - get medical help straight away.

For more info contact Sinéad your welfare officer or go to www.drugsinfo.ie



Women in the University



Deirdre O' Shaughnessy talks to senior women in UL and asks what life is really like for the first generation to 'have everything'.

IN a country where only 12% of university professors are women, in a university where the rate is even lower, at 9%, there are serious questions to be asked about gender equality. Why, in an institution which carries out research into gender inequality, which runs a special Traveller education programme, runs a masters course in Women's Studies and which prides itself on its access programme for disadvantaged and disabled students, is there such a level of inequality between men and women in the upper ranks? When 48% of the lowest category of academic staff is female, why is the percentage of those at the top so low?

The University is currently updating its employment figures and thus more detailed figures were unavailable at the time of writing. However, an Equal Opportunities Programme was launched last January to improve the situation. Its responsibilities include a development programme for support grades; UL Women's Forum; dignity and respect training and an integrated development programme for academic writing. Part of its remit is to 'address historical imbalances in male/female representation at the higher levels of the organisation through positive action interventions'.

At present, there are a handful of women in high-ranking administrative positions within the university. UL, in common with the other Irish universities, has never had a female President. One Vice President - Ailish Quinlivan, Vice President/Finance - is female. Ms Quinlivan is positive about her experiences within UL, saying she has never experienced any issues here, but admits that working in the private sector was not always so easy. She acknowledges that promotion was seen to take one or two years longer for women than men in private companies, but adds 'I don't think it was a deliberate bias, just a lack of understanding as to the different ways of working and self promotion (or lack thereof) that women have v men'. Ms Quinlivan laughingly mentions one former workplace which attempted to pigeonhole women employees; 'the men had golf weekends and the 'girls' had half day shopping trips with less than half the men's budget for dinner etc! I don't think that would be accepted or even attempted anymore!' Women also head up the Careers Service, the Student Affairs Division, Human Resources, Campus Life Services, the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Library.

Academically, the situation is far worse. Despite an equal distribution at junior lecturer status, UL has four women at Professorial level and 39 men, with one woman at Associate Professor level and 13 men. Out of six Colleges, only Humanities has a female Dean. Several years ago, a female lecturer took the university to the Labour Court for sexual discrimination - she asserted that she was not shortlisted for a professorial position by reason of her gender. She lost.

The University's highest-ranking female academic, Dean of Humanities, Professor Pat O' Connor, spoke to An Focal about her thoughts on women's progression within the university and in wider society. Professor O' Connor, a sociologist, has always focussed her research on women, women's relationships, and latterly, the dual issues of power and gender in organisations. Her first appointment

in UL was as course head of Women's Studies.

Professor O' Connor told An Focal that this was 'a very challenging position'. This was due, she says, to a perception that Women's Studies was 'about ball-breaking'. She mentions particularly one male colleague (still working in UL) who told her the issue was with the word woman itself, which he considered to be 'narrow, rigid and ideological'. Professor O' Connor's reaction was one of disbelief; '51% of the population, and he had a problem with the word woman - but he was honest enough to say it'.

She believes that even her appointment as Dean was a surprise; 'well, firstly, I'm a woman... and secondly, I had come from a position of being an advocate for those who are not exactly in the sunshine.' She believes her appointment was 'a very courageous act' on the part of the University, and that she hadn't wanted to stand in the beginning but she saw herself as a voice for change. Having been Course Director for Women's Studies she sees herself as lucky that she avoided being pigeonholed as 'single-issue, troublemaker, ball-breaker...a difficult person', but that the position gave her a huge level of visibility most women don't have.

Though daunted at the idea of being one of the few women Professors in Ireland and also one of the few female Deans, it is now common knowledge within the University that Professor O' Connor will be the first woman to make a bid for the Presidential seat. She is reluctant to comment on this, saying that UL has a reputation for being bold, but that the appointment of a woman as President might be a step too far. Furthermore, she is all too aware that only one Irish University President (DCU's Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski) comes from a non-Science background. Equal Opportunities Manager Nora Daly is delighted at the prospect of a woman entering the Presidential race, saying that it would be a fantastic step for women and for UL.

In considering the position of women both within the University and in wider society, Professor O' Connor believes that 'women's lives are marked by gender', though she is concerned that so many young people appear not to recognise this. She mentions the guilt felt by successful women towards other women, and cites the €1500 bursary she gives to two first year (female) HPSS students as the way in which she assuages this guilt. She feels that future generations of women should not 'have to make these mad choices' between career and family, and is adamant that society needs to address this issue. 'We really need to reflect deeply - if women don't have children we have no society... but on the other hand I feel that knowledge is too important to be created simply by men.'

The discrepancy between woman and men at higher academic levels is worrying, particularly in light of the numbers lower down on the ladder. It raises questions about the value placed on women's education, and indeed the value placed on women themselves - as O' Connor says; 'I suppose for me the issue is the value we give to women... I have a serious issue as to why we shouldn't be seen as the full shilling. I cannot understand it. I wasn't brought up to see myself as inferior. I don't: I can't.'

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

With ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE EQUAL STATUS ACT

The Equal Status Act gives you protection from discrimination (less favourable treatment). It applies to things like seeking accommodation, looking for a job, or trying to get into a club or bar.

You cannot be discriminated against for any of the following reasons:

- gender
- marital status
- family status
- sexual orientation
- religion
- age
- disability
- race or
- membership of the Travelling Community

If you feel you have experienced discrimination you can contact the SU 061-202519 or just call in, or the Equality Authority on 01 417 3333. You have the right to take a case to the Equality Authority against, for example, a pub that refuses you admission for a discriminatory reason.

There are plenty of exceptions in the Equal Status Act. You can look up the Act by going to www.oireachtas.ie and typing 'Equal Status Act' into the Search section. The SU also offers free legal advice so just call in if you feel you need advice.

Discrimination on Age Grounds

Treating someone under the age of 18 differently is not discrimination. Also there can be an age limit to licensed premises (pubs, clubs) for people over 18, but it must apply uniformly (e.g. under 21), must be put on a conspicuous notice inside or outside, and must be applied in good faith.

Bouncers

Action taken by bouncers to ensure compliance with the Intoxicating Liquor Acts is not discrimination, so long as it is done in good faith. Bouncers must be licensed and carry identification.

Accommodation

You cannot be refused accommodation on discriminatory grounds. However there are exceptions. Accommodation can be refused on grounds of gender if it the particular accommodation is for men or women only.

Making a claim

Anybody who wants to make a claim of discrimination must notify the person against whom the claim is being made in writing within two months of the incident identifying the nature of the claim and saying they intend to seek redress under the Act. If this is not sent a claim cannot be pursued. (The time limit may be extended sometimes).

If there is no reply or an unsatisfactory reply the complaint should be referred within six months to:

The Equality Tribunal,
3 Clonmel Street,
Dublin 2

Any more info can be obtained from Sinéad in the SU, email sinead.hickey@ul.ie or just call in. I'm happy to help.

Ireland - a moaning nation



BY NIAMH CLOWRY

FOR many in Ireland we live in a time of unknown wealth and affluence, in an era of technological advancement and with more job security than ever before, and thus it would seem that we should, for the most part be content with what we have and the lifestyles we lead. There are more cars on our roads than ever before, more people are

travelling and travelling further afield and more frequently. Restaurants and bars are to be found in abundance in every town and city and the quality of life and standard of living for the majority of the population has improved ten fold. Yet consistently day in, day out, in our newspapers, on the radio and on television we are subjected to the moaning scenario and attitude that seems to convey that we are far from happy with our current lifestyles and way of life. There seems to be a prevailing attitude that we want more and until we get what we want, the moaning will not stop. When was it that we turned so greedy and materialistic? Did it happen overnight or has it been a gradual and negative effect of

the great Celtic Tiger and all the prosperity it brought.

The Irish were for generations, renowned around the world as a nation that was full of "craic" and a people who were welcoming, hospitable and warm. Yet these days it is doubtful that visitors to Ireland would concur with this particular description. The Ireland of today and its people very rarely fit into the age old description that visitors once gave us. In fact we are currently experiencing a wave of anti social behaviour on a level not known previously, or so we are led to believe at least. The youth is to blame seems to be the consensus from a cross section of society, yet it is not the youth who are moaning about their lives, this is the preoccupation

of the vast section of society that is dominated by those in the thirty to sixty plus age bracket. These are the people who complain of ever mounting hospitable bed shortages, of increasing prices and poor value for money. It is this section of society who one after another are taking to the streets to protest about wages, or poor work conditions or just general displeasure with the status quo.

Antisocial behaviour in Ireland has become a problem, however it is not one that has suddenly erupted, it has just been left to fester for too long and has manifested itself into a larger problem than it should be. Denying a problem will not make it go away, nor however will constantly griping about it and writing

about it everyday in the newspaper or ringing Gerry Ryan and Joe Duffy to bemoan the Ireland of the 21st century. While there may be some credibility in pointing the finger of blame for certain incidents of antisocial behaviour at the youth of our country, the blame should not lie firmly on our doorsteps.

Perhaps we do not complain as much as our peers because we are enjoying the benefits of an easy student life and are not immersed in the world of paying high taxes and working 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. This however is all too easy an argument to make. Many students struggle daily with the costs of a third level education and many must work one or more jobs in order too keep themselves afloat. Yet for the most part we

are not complaining. Perhaps we are more idealistic than our elders or maybe we have the foresight to realise that we are considerably lucky to be where we are and that complaining will in fact not get us anywhere.

The current under thirties in residence in Ireland will make up the future workforce of this country, our children will be the ones who will take advantage of the educational and medical facilities in years too come. There are certain traits we all retain from our elders, however perhaps if we can learn one thing from their experience it should be too not repeat the mistakes of becoming a moaning nation and try and enjoy what we have when we have it, because god knows we have far more than millions of people across the world.

An Ghaeilgeoir

A Chairde Gael!

Seo é an chéad Gaeilgeoir don bliain nua. Do na daoine a bhí anseo anuraigh, 'sea, táim fós anseo, sa Tolglann, ag ól café! Ach i ndáiríre, bhí bliain iontach againn an bhliain seo chaite. Bhunaigh an Cumann Gaelach, d'oscail an Tolglann, bhí Seachtain na Gaeilge iontach againn! So gach rud san áireamh, bhí bliain iontach. Ach tá tús i bhfad níos fearr curtha leis an mbliain seo. Ar Aoine 13ú Deireadh Fómhair d'oscail Spraoi Luimnigh. Dóibh siúd nár chuala faoi, bhí Spraoi Luimnigh eagraithe ag an Cumann Gaelach, Na Gaeil Óga Ollscoil Luimnigh, agus maoinithe ag an Arts and Sports fund. Bhí sé mar aidhm ag Spraoi, na Cumainn Gaelaigh a tharraing le chéile in áit amháin chun traenáil agus nascanna a dhéanamh. D'éirigh thar bharr leis an imeacht. Bhí thart ar 120 daoine ann ón Ollscoil seo agus ollscoileanna eile. Bhí deis againn ceardlann a thógáil ar phleanáil choiste agus ceann eile ar feachtasaíocht agus déileáil leis na meán. Bhí cinn eile ar damhsa, amhránaíocht agus dráma. Bhí ceardlann iontach speisialta againn freisin: ceardlann bodhrán le Rónán Ó Snodaigh ó Kíla. Bhí ceol agus craid a ceardlann sin agus lean sé le fead beagnach dhá uair a chloig! D'fhoghlaim gach duine

cúpla cleas ó Rónán freisin agus scileanna conas an Bodhrán a seinm níos fearr. Ar an Sathairn rinne Rónán gig speisialta sna Stáblaí agus bhí gach duine faoi dhraoicht an t-amhránaí cáiliúla seo! Rinne sé gig dhá uair a chloig agus d'imigh an t-am chomh tapaídh! Seinn sé cuid maith do na sean-amhráin Kíla agus cuid dena hAmhráin fhéin freisin. Ar an Aoine bhí oíche cóisir sna Stáblaí agus bhí daoine ag déanamh ionsaí na hInse ar an urlár! Bhí deis iontach ag daoine nascú le chéile agus rinne a lán daoine buaincháirde i rith na deireadh seachtaine. Bhí an traenáil iontach cabhrach freisin, agus tá fhios againn anois conas obair choiste a dhéanamh i gceart! (faoi dheireadh!!!) Bhí an ceardlann ar feachtasaíocht iontach freisin. Beidh cúpla feachtais le déanamh roimh deireadh na bliaina. Ar an Sathairn bhí sé mar ónóir againn fáilte a chur roimh Choiste Náisiúnta Na Gaeil Óga. Bhí cruinniú náisiúnta againn anseo san Ollscoil don chéad uair agus bhí a lán le phlé againn. Bhí ionadaí ó gach craobh agus Ollscoil sa tír agus mar sin bhí sé mar cuid mhór den deireadh seachtaine é a dhéanamh.

Rud eile a rinneamar i rith na deireadh seachtaine ná bhíomar in ann Tolglann na Gaeilge a thaispeánt do dhaoine éagsúla a bhí ar cuairt. Bhí

iontas ar gach duine faoin dtógra atá againn anseo, agus bhí siad go léir in éad don tseomra atá againne! Bhí deis againn freisin ár gcampus álainn a thaispeánt do dhaoine a bhí ag iarraidh súil timpeall na háite. Ar an iomlán bhí deireadh seachtaine iontach againn, rinneamar a lán chairde, rinneamar traenáil iontach a thug an-chuid cabhair dúinn scileanna nua a fhoghlaim chun ár gCumainn a rith i gceart. Seo é an chéad uair i beagnach fiche bliain a rinne éinne iarracht muintir óige na Gaeilge a tharraing le chéile in áit amháin, agus d'eirigh go geall leis. An chéad uair eile níor thainig an tslua, ach tháinig siad an uair seo, agus tharla sé in Ollscoil Luimnigh. Táim an-bhródúil as, agus ba cheart go mbeidhmuid go leir an-bhródúil as freisin!

Tá cúpla plean sa phíopa faoi láthair: Turas go Baile Átha Cliath chun freastal ar 'Gleo' i gClub Chonradh na Gaeilge. Turas go dtí an t-Oireachtas i nDoire i mí na Shamhna. Agus, beidh Kíla ag seinm i nDolans sa chathair ar an 25ú Samhain, so beidh turas eile againn! Má tá suim agat freastal ar aon imeacht atá á eagrú againn, dean teagmháil ag breandan. oheamhaigh@ul.ie nó ancumanngaeilach@gmail.com Bí i dteagmháil linn!

**Meas Mhór.
Breandán**



SAFETY is the most important thing for any motorist, we all want to keep the no-claims intact, we want to keep the bumpers scratch free. But do we drive safely. When you ask this question people always tell you that they 'do the speed limit'. But what about where speed limits are too high for the road you are on? Is obeying speed limits enough? Do we pay due care and attention to other road users? Because, if we are to be honest, none of us do, we whiz by the cyclists, drive straight through pedestrian crossings and park in the most inconsiderate places, and about 90% of people don't have a clue how to use roundabouts. The key to this is education and observation. If we educate ourselves on how to drive correctly, and then put it into practice, observe the actions of other road users, and anticipate their actions, we might have a chance of driving safely.

And what about what we drive? Is it in roadworthy condition? When was the last time you checked your tyre pressures? Do you even know what they are? When was the last time you checked that your lights are working, that you have sufficient coolant, brake fluid and water in your screen washers? To be able to drive safely ourselves, we need to be driving a safe car. A few simple facts:

Low tyre pressure can lead to instability while cornering, and make the car more inclined to wander on the road, it also causes premature tyre wear.

High tyre pressure can lead to potentially catastrophic blow-outs and also reduces the surface of the tyre that is in contact with the tarmac, this causes there to be less friction, less grip, and ultimately more chance of being in an accident. Having no water in your screen washer means that should your windscreen get

dirty, you will be unable to clean it, resulting in poor visibility.

Low brake fluid reduces the potential pressure in your brake system, meaning less efficient braking.

Driving with one brake light, defective indicators, blown headlights etc seriously reduces your visibility on the road. A blown brake light means that one of the lamps telling drivers behind that you are stopping is not available..... Accident waiting to happen!

So please people, for all our sakes, learn the rules of the road. Show courtesy to cyclists and pedestrians, learn how to use roundabouts, slow down when coming to them, and don't run red lights! Keep safe out there!

Rules of the road are available on the Department of transport's website or you can just Google them, but make sure that they are the Irish ones!

Exec jigsaw complete



BY DANIEL SULLIVAN

ANOTHER piece in the jigsaw of the transition to a wholly new Student Union executive was in place last week with the election on October 12th of a new equality officer. Niamh Coleman 4th year Insurance & European Studies was the successful candidate on this occasion, beating out Shane O'Callaghan 2nd year European Studies with over 60% of the votes cast.

The role of equality officer is an unpaid sabbatical

position and is responsible for bringing forward any issues in order to prevent discrimination or exclusion in the Union's policies and activities. Needless to say all students in UL are valued, but there are times when specific interests must be considered when making a decision. The Union strives to maximise equality for all students, regardless of race, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability or other personal or academic status. The Equality Officer operates from the office of the Deputy President/Welfare.

Valid Poll 321 Spoilt 1, mislaid 2
Coleman 205 ~ 65%
O'Callaghan 113 ~ 35%

Again the overall low turnout has to be a cause for concern for the executive. Just over three hundred votes were cast, from an electorate of

over 10,000. One vote was spoiled and two appeared to go missing though that could have resulted from people simply not casting the ballot after receiving it.

Of course, given the nature of the electorate it is always going to be an enormous advantage for someone who has been in the college 3 years prior to running. Coleman and her team were prepared to put in the work and gladhanded as many people as possible and brightened up the Canteen for a few days. Given the circumstances and the time of year, the contest was quite clean (all that mucky weather can lead to all kinds of messing) and fought in a good spirit. The contrasting difficulty in making an impression in the short time available and as a 2nd year was always going to make the terrain problematic but O'Callaghan performed well.

All credit to him and his team for a good performance. Perhaps this isn't the last we've heard from him. Once again, we saw more endorsements from various Hollywood dignitaries. One might even say it was 'Pedro what won it.'

There were almost twenty people present for the count, which would seem to suggest that interest in the democratic process is not completely lost. Or it could be the case that they had very little to be doing with themselves on a Thursday evening.

The question remains over how to increase the turnout. It may be worth giving consideration to allowing people to vote over the web. Yet, the general feeling persists that even if you paid people to vote they probably wouldn't. Perhaps, a day's free parking might do the trick!

Happy Halloween?

KATIE HARRINGTON

HALLOWEEN is a great time to do what a lot of us do best-act like children! Dressing up, playing party games and heading off to the Halloween ball can make for one of the most memorable nights out of the year. However, you don't want the night to be remembered for the wrong reasons. Two huge issues that need to be highlighted at Halloween in particular are respect for your neighbours and personal safety.

In many of the local estates students make up the majority of residents, but it is important to remember that there are also families living in these areas. Many have children and babies, and funnily enough will not appreciate being woken up at all hours of the night with fireworks being set off outside their door, or getting 3am trick-or-treaters. Halloween is a mid-semester opportunity for us to blow off steam (metaphorically speaking) but it is important to strike a balance and to keep noise levels reasonable after a certain time of night. Vandalism of any sort is of course completely unacceptable, and higher

standards of behaviour are expected from students of the university.

Owners of domestic animals will also appreciate your courtesy at this time of year; news reports last weekend showed disturbing pictures of a cat that had actually been thrown onto a bonfire during pre-Halloween "celebrations" but had just about survived having been rescued by a local man. While it is easy to think nothing so cruel would happen locally, we must consider animal safety during our celebrations, even at a less drastic level.

Personal safety must also take priority this weekend. Fireworks, often illegal, bangers and bonfires are the cause of many injuries each year. Attending controlled displays is one way of getting into the spirit of things without the risk. As always the Student's Union advises looking out for yourself and those celebrating with you, as well as a mature attitude to alcohol so that you- and your neighbours- have a happy Halloween!

Katie Harrington is the Community Relations Officer for the Students' Union and can be contacted through the SU.

Homework with Alan Higgins, ULSU Education Officer

I was wondering if you could help..... The Adviser System

THERE always time in your college life which you need to ask for advice, what is great is that there are a heap of people out there you can go to, family, friends, classmates, the Students' Union, Counsellors and your Advisor.

The Advisor system has existed in some shape or form since the establishment of the University and provides an important support structure to students. Each student is assigned a student advisor, who a member of faculty based in the home department of your programme. Much like the Students' Union, the advisor is there to provide essential advice about the challenges you face or point you in the right direction. The great thing about advisors is that most of them been in UL for many moons and should be in a better position to know how the system works. Equally because they are based in your faculty they are aware of the issues which students face in your discipline, including the little ticks that make your area of study that little bit different from the next.

It is really important that you get to know your advisor for a number of reasons. Firstly, you never know when the preverbal is going to hit the fan and you need help; secondly, its good to know members of your faculty, for advise, reference, etc. Thirdly believe it or not they are actually people and it's good to know you have someone to talk.

Now for ye faculty (we know you read An Focal-we have witness). Get to know your advisees, you may unlock some hidden potential and utilise their academic brilliance; you can get a warm and fuzzy feeling know that you have made a difference. Finally, believe it or not students are actually people and it's good for them to know that they have someone to talk.

Now go! Mingle!!

Ross O' Carroll Kelly
Aka
Paul Howard

An Phluais
Wednesday Week 6
6pm
AFFLUENCE



TEACH 65

Tá rudaí aisteacha faoi bhun in uimhir 65...

SARAH NÍ CHORRAGÁIN

Ní gnáththeach é uimhir 65 i nGráig Chill Mhuire. Is teach an-neamhghnách ar fad é. Tá seachtar mac léinn ón gcéad bhliain, mé féin san áireamh, inár gcónaí ann. Laistigh de Theach 65, tarlaíonn rud éigean nach dtarlaíonn i dteach ar bith eile ar an gcampas: labhraíonn muid Gaeilge an t-am uilig. Teach na Gaeilge atá ann agus tá gach duine againn urraithe ag Aonad na Gaeilge leis an nGaeilge a labhairt i gcónaí

agus chun í a chur chun cinn ar an gcampas. Réitíonn an seachtar againn go han-mhaith le chéile: Debra Ní Shúilleabháin, Cairbre Ó Cairealláin, Siobhán Ní Luíng, Maitiú Ó Fátharta, Treasa Breathnach, Caitliona Ní Ghallachóir agus mise, Sarah Ní Chorrágáin. Tá suim ollmhór againn sa teanga agus tá sé mar aidhm againn roinnt imeachtaí trí mheán na Gaeilge a eagrú do mhic léinn na hollscoile leis an Ghaeilge a spreagadh i suíomh neamhfhoirmiúil. Táimid i mbun oibre cheana

féin DJ Gaelach a chur ag seinnim ar an gcampas mar aon le Lá Spóirt trí Ghaeilge, Oíche Scannánaíochta Gaeilge agus turas Gaeltachta chuig na hOileáin Árann á eagrú (téigh i dteagmháil le 0642568@student.ul.ie más spéis libh teacht). Ní imeachtaí Gaeilge amháin atá á eagrú againn anseo i dTeach 65. Táimid anseo chomh maith le cabhair agus cúnamh a thabhairt do dhaoine atá sé ag teastáil uathu ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. Ná bíodh faííos oraibh mar sin buailleadh isteach orainn le

cupán tae a ghlacadh agus comhrá a bheith agat linn. Tá lán fáilte romhaibh ar fad teacht chuig na himeachtaí atá á n-eagrú againn freisin. Bígí ag faire amach d'fhógraí thart fán gcampas maidir leis na himeachtaí nó buail isteach chuig Tolglann na Gaeilge in Aontas na Mac Léinn le clárú mar bhall den Chumann Gaelach agus gheobhaidh tú ríomhphoist agus clóscéilíní faoin obair atá ar siúl againn. Agus ná déanaigí dearmad go bhfuil rud éigean éagsúil ag fanacht daoibh ag Teach 65!

TRACY LYNCH

BUS to Limerick: ten euro, food for the week: forty euro, "entertainment" for the week: forty-five euro... being a student for four years: priceless!!!! Ok... maybe we don't spend all our money on food and drink, contrary to popular belief! There are those books to buy, rent and bills to pay and for the growing population of driving students there is also the ever increasing charges of petrol and car parking. Gone our the days when my older sister got thirty pounds on a Sunday evening going back to college and managed to have a good time on that! Being a student is expensive and in today's colleges every student has a different means of surviving. Some support themselves entirely, working summers and every waking hour to put themselves through college. Most students today are fortunate to have family to help them through college, some entirely, some partly while they too work part-time. Also, there are many students in debt; loans and overdrafts all play a role in funding our education these days. But these loans can be seen as very small in comparison with students in other countries where their fees alone involve loans amounting to tens of thousands by the time they obtain

their degree. However, probably the biggest financial aid for students today is the grant. Local county councils and VEC's provide a set amount for maintenance during the semester and give that in three instalments over the year. They also subsidise fees, leaving a small amount to be paid by the student. All grants are based on a means test of a family's income and they have different levels determining how much each student gets. Most students today will tell you that they honestly would not be able to afford college if it was not for the grant. These students come from families that may have only a one parent income or have two or more members in college at the same time and that's something very few families can do today without financial support. Most students use their grant as their rent money and work for or have their family supply their allowance, or vice versa. It's not free drinking money that the country's tax payers provide... despite what many of my working friends might think!! The third level education grant is possibly the best idea the government ever had as it provides a stepping stone for all members of society to attend college. It takes a lot of pressure off students in relation to their finances and proves to be a good investment in education.



Do you like the sound of your own voice? We will too!

ULSU is looking for interested students to set up and run its online radio station

For more information email: deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie or call into the SU and ask for Deirdre

Winter car checks

AS winter approaches rapidly bringing with it longer days, colder weather, rain, wind and all the other unpleasantness it is time for us motorists to once more lift the bonnet and prepare our cars for the rough ride that is ahead. All of the jobs outlined in this article are simple and can be performed on the driveway, or in the carpark of your apartment! Modern cars with all their translucent reservoirs make it a quick job to check the majority of the fluid levels and it is easy to know when topping up is required. First thing is first, Check the car for Oil, pull out the dipstick and make sure that the it reads full. Top up if necessary. Check the level of your Brake fluid, and top up if necessary. Check the level of your coolant, and make sure that it is not just water that is in your engine. If you suspect that it is only water, top it up with antifreeze and at the earliest convenience buy antifreeze/coolant and make it your business to flush out the system and refill it with coolant. Also check the condition and tension of the fan belt. If your car is an Automatic, it is time for another check. Start the car and leave it running until it achieves running temperature. (this might also be a good opportunity to check if the cooling fan and thermostat are working) Once the car has reached running temperature sit in and move the selector through each of the positions P R N D 2 1, and 1 2 D N R P. With the car back in park, remove the transmission dipstick, and

check the level (the transmission fluid should only be checked when hot) If the transmission requires topping up, please refer to the owners manual for the correct specification of fluid be it DEXRON 2, 3 or 4. At this stage it is time to get a friend to assist. Get your friend to sit in the car and press the brake while you stand behind and make sure that all the brake lights are working, then check the indicators (left and right, don't use the hazards) and check the hazard's. Then switch on the lights going through parking lights, dipped and main beam, then check the fog lights, remembering to switch them off when they are checked with the ignition on, put the car in reverse and check that the reversing lights are working. The next step is to check the condition and pressure of the tyres. The minimum legal thread depth on a tyre is 1.6mm, however I recommend that you change at 2mm just to be on the safe side. Check for uneven wear on the tyres, wear on the inside or outside greater than that on the outside or inside can be a sign that the tracking is out of line on the car. This can cause the car to steer to one side and can be easily remedied by a tyre centre for about €20-€40. Make sure to check your tyre pressures, this should be weekly check!!!! Inflate the tyres if required. But never over inflate! After this the fun stuff can begin! Get the hoover and some son of a gun and attack the interior cleaning it to a

shine. Then get the power hose and attack the bodywork. Get in under the car with the hose and clean the underbody and under the wheelarches getting rid of all the rust-causing dirt and grime that can collect there. When washing the body, use a proper car cleaning product, not one that you get in the €2 shop! Clean off all the dirt wash the car twice or three times if necessary, and then dry it off with a chamois cloth. Now go off and make yourself a nice cup of tea while the remaining water drips off. When you come back, using a nice fine cloth, apply a thin coat of liquid wax to the body (keep it off the plastic trim where possible) then leave it dry and polish off the haze, repeat the process twice and at the end using a fresh cloth wipe the car down completely. If your car has body coloured bumpers, you are nearly finished, for those of us with plastic bumpers, get a

bottle of 'back to black' and apply to the bumpers, door handles and mirror casings. Repeat this until they are truly black again. What have the last two steps achieved? The thorough cleaning and waxing protects the bodywork from rust, and helps protect the paint from the road dirt that can scratch the fine lacquer layer the bumper coating refreshes the plastic in the bumpers helping strengthen the plastic and protect it against the cold weather. I would advise you all to check the boot after all this and make sure that there are no leaks also check the sun-roof if there is one fitted, and make sure that it is not letting in water that might ruin the car's interior. All in all this is a day's work, but well worth it, to make sure that the car is ready for the long winter ahead. Tóg é go bog é!

Campus Sport

UL Bohs Off To A Flying Start

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

UL Bohemian rugby team have got off to a flying start in the AIB All Ireland League. After two games Bohs are sitting proudly on top of the table after two powerful performances.

First up Bohs took on Terenure at Thomond Park. The 43-8 tells its own story of a ruthless display. Impressive winger Martin McPhail helped himself to two tries as did M Butler J O'Neil with one from Ben Martin. Fly-half Martin added three conversions with one from T Luke for a comprehensive win.

On the 21st October Bohs had a tricky away tie with UCD. Martin McPhail was once again in top form to ensure a comfortable victory. The winger chipped in with a hat-trick of tries with two from number eight J O' Neil. Ben Martin was once again in



UL Bohs in action

fine form with two conversions and four penalties. The final score of 39-3 with a bonus point secured was a super result.

After this smashing start UL Bohs can be confident of having a good season. The stats speak for themselves. 82 points scored, 11 conceded

with ten points on the board. Tougher tasks lie ahead though with Clontarf and Lansdowne next up.

Ag Iomáint ar Son na hOllscoile Dóchas Mór na Bliana 2007

LE CAIRBRE Ó CAIREALLÁIN

LEIS an bhliain nua ollscoile buailte linn, tá séasúr nua iomána tosaithe. Agus cibé mar a d'éirigh le hiarrachtaí lucht na céad bhliana anuraidh ó thaobh Craobh na hÉireann de, is tú úr atá againn anois. Níor bhain lucht céad bhliana Ollscoil Luimnigh Craobh na hÉireann amach roimhe seo ach le teacht scaifte nua scoláirí agus bainistíocht nua, tá an-dóchas ann go mbainfidh amach i mbliana é.

Bhí tuairim 's céad duine i láthair ag na trialacha i mbliana agus iomaíocht fhíochmhar á himirt acu. Roghnaíodh dhá fhoireann shealadach i ndiaidh cúig thriail ach beidh tuilleadh trialacha ann go fóill sula ndéanfaí cinneadh cinnte ar an dá phainéal.

Is léir ón méid sin féin go bhfuil na bainisteoirí Ger Cunningham agus Declan Fitzgerald thar a bheith dáiríre faoin bhfoireann iomána seo, gan ach rud amháin ar intinn acu agus sin leis an gCraobh a bhaint amach. Dhá bhainisteoir nach bhfuil le sárú in Éirinn atá i gceannas i mbliana.

Bhuaigh Newtownshandrum Craobh na hÉireann i 2004 faoi stiúir Ger Cunningham agus ghlac Declan Fitzgerald foireann mhionúir Luimnigh chomh fada le Cluiche Ceannais na hÉireann i 2005.

Tá traidisiún láidir iomána san ollscoil seo freisin agus is mór an rud é imirt ar son na hollscoile. Sula ndeachaigh an fhoireann amach don chéad cluiche in éadan LIT, labhair Ger Cunningham faoin traidisiún céanna sin. Labhair sé faoin mbród atá de dhíth agus an

léine á chaitheamh agus an tábhacht a bhaineann leis an onóir sin. Dar leis, tagann an Club ar dtús, an Contae ina dhiaidh, ansin an Coláiste. Mura bhfuil imreoir sásta chuile rud a thabhairt ar son na cúise agus ar son na foirne, ní fiú faic an t-imreoir sin.

Is rud ar leith é iomáint ollscoile. Tá sí crua, tá sí garbh, glacann tú sunc agus tugann tú ceann ar ais. Ní bhogann an sliotar mar a bhogann sé sa samhradh an oiread agus a bhogann sa gheimhreadh agus bíonn ort dul i gcleachtadh ar an gclabar agus ar an bhfearthainn. Ach is fiú é nó ní bhíonn ach seans amháin agat Craobh na Céad Bliana a bhaint amach agus bíonn dúil dhóchais ann gach bliain an Corn Fitzgibbon a thabhairt abhaile i mí an Mhárta.

Cé go bhfuil ag éirí go maith leis an bhfoireann

Fitzgibbon cheana féin agus dhá bhua faoina gcrios acu, ní amhlaidh an scéal ag lucht na céad bliana, iad ag cailleadh go trom in éadan LIT. Drochthús a bhí ann go deimhin ach níl i ndán ach feabhas ar chúrsaí anois agus seasfaidh greadadh mar sin leis an bhfoireann ag deireadh an lae.

Ar ndóigh, tá níos mó i gceist le foireann iomána na hollscoile ná cluiche amháin ar bith, go háirithe sa céad bhliain. Tagann iománaithe le chéile ó gach cearn den tír leis an bpaisean céanna don CLG agus cruthaítear cairdeas a mhaireann fad saoil eatarthu. Rud ar leith atá ann nuair a chruthaítear foireann as scaifte daoine aonaracha, foireann leis an meoin agus an sprioc céanna a sheasfaidh mar aonad le chéile, ar an bpáirc agus as.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: The Revolution Begins

BRAZILIAN Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) is a martial art that was first developed in Brazil by the Gracie family during the mid-20th century. Originally based on the Japanese martial arts of Judo and Japanese Jiu Jitsu as they existed before World War II, it has since developed into an independent system with the main emphasis on ground fighting and grappling. Many people will be familiar with many of the concepts of BJJ from watching the UFC from time to time. A new club is currently being set up to bring Brazilian Jiu Jitsu to UL (details below). According to founder member Debra Donovan, the sport is different from Japanese Jiu Jitsu which is the version known to most people.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Success for UL

There was success for the UL BJJ club on the 21st October when Michael Crkon and Debra Donovan took home some silverware. Michael won the Super Heavyweight White Belt division and the Absolute division. Debra took the gold for the Absolute Ladies division and silver for the heavyweight Ladies division. Both have been training with the UL trainer for some time now and are the founder members of the UL BJJ club. This is an exceptional start to the UL BJJ club's existence on campus.

Training Mondays 9pm to 10.30pm in the gym in the Old Sports Building.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in action

Sporting question of the edition

Who am I?

- 1) I am Munster's most capped player
- 2) I hold the record for most Heineken European Cup appearances
- 3) My father, sister and I have represented Ireland at senior rugby level
- 4) I studied at St. Munchin's College in Limerick
- 5) I captained the winning side that Biarritz in the Heineken Cup last May

Who am I?

The first person to email deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie with the answer will win a free fitness test and two months free membership to the UL Arena.



www.universityarena.com



Who holds the keys to the Kingdom?

PATRICK MANNIX

AS the clocks go back winter is ushered in upon us. The dark leaves lay saturated on the ground, rivers overflow with excess rainwater, smoke puffs from chimney tops all around the country meaning it's surely a time for settling down and relaxing on those cold winter nights by the fire. However this is not the case in GAA circles in Kerry. Even though the inter-county season is over following yet another All-Ireland for Kerry, this does not mean they will rest on their laurels for too long. The majority of county's would bask in the rays of All-Ireland sunshine until the April showers next touch their boots but for Kerry however Winter brings change, be it in training regimes to stay ahead of the hungry pack, or in this case a new set of ideas from a new manager.

While the players head off on a well deserved 17 day break to Australia to unwind after a tough season, I'm sure the new manager will have more thoughts in his head than what sun screen to wear. Jack O'Connor's departure leaves a huge void and uncertainty in Kerry football, as the county looks to be the first to retain the Sam Maguire since Larry Tompkins raised Sam Maguire aloft in 1990. In a managerial career that spanned three years, he took Kerry to three All-Ireland finals and won two of them. He also led Kerry to two National League titles and two



How will Kerry fare without the legendary Moynihan (Picture by Patrick Mannix)

Munster title victories. During O'Connor's tenure as manager Kerry lost just two championship matches. Along with having to deal with this unfathomable record the new manager will have to stem the exodus of key players who are leaving, as well as having to replace the rocks that were Seamus Moynihan and Mike McCarthy, who this successful Kerry team have founded their previous four All-Ireland winning successes upon. Although there is no shortage of underage talent in Kerry with the likes of Tommy Walsh and Paddy Curran coming through the ranks, it is an awful ask for these players to have such an impact as McCarthy and Moynihan had on this Kerry team.

This position holds prestige and recognition in GAA circles worldwide so O'Connor's successor has to

have the same passion and knowledge of GAA both in Kerry and in general as he did. O'Connor based his successes on grassroots GAA with Dromid Pearses and Colaiste Na Sceilge keeping the link between inter-county, club and colleges

football alive and well. Therefore I feel a club manager in Kerry will get the position. The three most likely candidates are Pat O'Shea (Dr.Crokes), James O'Sullivan (South Kerry) and John Evans (Kerins O'Rahillys). At present these three clubs are the kingpins in Kerry football, especially the divisional side South Kerry who are looking to regain the Bishop Moynihan trophy for a third year in a row. This selection can again be whittled down to just the two. Pat O'Shea trainer of the Dr. Crokes in Killarney is currently employed as a full time Coaching and Games Manager with the Munster Council and his current job with the Munster Council would not allow him to simultaneously take charge of a county team. This leaves Evans and O'Sullivan contesting in my opinion the vacancy. O'Sullivan has already gained the upper hand on Evans, when his South Kerry team beat Evans Kerins O'Rahillys team to yet another county final spot and possibly a place in the history books. Evans has vast experience and is the most successful club manager in the county. He has already led Laune Rangers (Killorglin) to All-Ireland success and is doing a magnificent job with Kerins O'Rahillys. O'Sullivan however is bidding for a treble of county championships successes in Kerry which is no mean feat and his selection would also keep the close links between South Kerry

and the hierarchy of Kerry football very much alive.

Speaking of close links within Kerry GAA circles last weekend I get the feeling Evans may pip the post but then again Kerry football is full of surprises. As the search for O'Connor's successor continues over the coming week, other names will be touted as possible candidates with names like Stephen Stack (former player), John O'Dwyer, Charlie Nelligan (former player), Ger O'Keeffe (outgoing selector) likely to be linked to the post. Eoin 'Bomber' Liston is closely linked with the post also, although sources close to him say he isn't interested in the job. John Kennedy current Kerry minor team trainer is also being considered but if selected this would leave a void in another sector of Kerry football, a vital one at that considering Kerry have not won a minor All-Ireland in over a decade. Surprisingly Paidi O Se, never far from controversy, has thrown his name into the ring but I seriously doubt any true Kerry fan would welcome the Ventry man back with open arms after the 'animal' fiasco and the Meath drubbing.

Who better to seek a final opinion on the matter than Terrace Talk presenter and former All-Ireland winning player with Kerry than Weeshie Fogarty. 'To be honest I would have thought it would have been former player and former Limerick manager Liam Kearns, but he was snatched up quick by the Laois County Board. Therefore I would see Evans as the most likely candidate but you never know with Kerry football'. It would have been nice as a final hooray to a great servant of the GAA Mick O'Dwyer if the opportunity had arisen earlier to once again see him pace the sidelines of Fitzgerald Stadium handing out his masterful GAA savoir-faire to the players. A sight I'm sure would bring many a great memory back to the mind of a Kerry and GAA follower. Whoever is selected Kerry still are looking towards next year's championship and a two in a row is a high possibility.

You know you are a GAA Shaper when ...

1. You wear white boots
2. You are the only guy with tanned legs on the team in April
3. You put gel in your hair before the game
4. You have bleached hair or a ponytail
5. You have to get a hair cut before every match
6. You wear your collar up to your ears
7. You have at least one life threatening injury per game
8. You hang around outside the dressing room after a match (still toggged out) looking for people to tell you how good you played
9. You warm up looking into the crowd
10. You wear the latest range in thigh supports, knee bandages, etc when in reality there's shag all wrong with you.

Mixed Fortunes For Freshers

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

THE start of the fresher hurling league brought a mixed bag of results on Thursday 19th October against L.I.T.

The 'A' team were totally outclassed losing out by 4-16 to 1-12. L.I.T made a blistering start outscoring UL 2-3 to 0-1 in the early stages. UL responded though with scores from Ryan O'Dwyer, Ger Scales, Seamus Hickey and Martin Walsh. Despite this he half-time score was L.I.T 3-7 UL 0-9. The pattern continued into the second half with L.I.T in complete control. Ryan O'Dwyer grabbed a late goal but it was only a consolation. O'Dwyer, Hickey and Scales were best in a disappointing display. There are definitely better things to come from this team as the players are there it is just a case of producing on the day.

Meanwhile the 'B' team produced an impressive performance to emerge victorious 4-11 to 1-2. Ger Bond's early goal was a sign of things to come with UL utterly dominant. Bond added a further 1-2 from frees to increase the lead. Elusive full-forward Declan Teefy also grabbed 1-2 with further scores from Enda Walsh and Colm Mackey to give UL a 3-

6 to 1-2 half-time lead. UL finished off the job in the second period. Bond found the net once more to finish with a tally of 3-5. Mackey at midfield showed great accuracy with three long-range frees. The defence was rock solid holding L.I.T scoreless in the second half. Others to impress were Pat O'Neill, John Rodgers and Enda Walsh.

After these two contrasting displays more work needs to be done. Some of the 'B' team such as Ger Bond and Declan Teefy should be considered for the 'A' team on this evidence. I'm sure though that Ger Cunningham and company will get it right and the performance levels will surely improve as the year goes on.



Sports Editor Patrick Mannix pictured with current Kerry Captain and South Kerry player Declan O'Sullivan at the Kerry team homecoming celebration



Training Tue & Thurs
7pm Beginners
8pm Intermediate

Everybody welcome!
Come give it a go!!

Sporting Quotes of the Edition

- **It was a bit cheeky wasn't it? But I don't think it was that bad. It would have been worse if he'd turned round and dropped the front of his shorts instead. It was a bit cheeky wasn't it? But I don't think it was that bad. It would have been worse if he'd turned round and dropped the front of his shorts instead.'**
Ian Holloway, on Joey Barton's short dropping antics.
- **"I want to keep the beard until I play my first game. I don't think it's good for me. After I play the first game I will cut it off, and my hair as well to make me more handsome!"**
Manchester City defender Sun Jihai insists that he will not shave until he returns to the first team.
- **"There were times he got so far up my nose I could feel his boots on my chin."**
Crystal Palace chairman Simon Jordan on his predecessor Ron Noades.
- **Garth Crooks: "Steve, what went wrong tonight?" Steve McClaren: "Well basically we conceded two goals and lost the game.**
The England manager's analysis of the 2-0 defeat in Zagreb is about as comprehensive as his tactics on the pitch.
- **Chelsea's Michael Essien has revealed his incredible energy comes from his 14 hours of sleep every day. Reminds me of a few people in college and explains the madness in the lodge**

Bolton's 6ft 9in Chinese import Yang Changpeng had some problems adapting to Western food until he discovered KFC Good old Superdine I mean KFC where would you be without it (China perhaps)
- **"I feel like a man who has been given the double of his key to a mate. The guy comes, takes your car, uses it for 10 days and leaves it in the middle of a field without any petrol."**
Arsene Wenger on the perils of international football
- **"The drivers' championship is over because I don't want to go to Brazil hoping someone else retires, that's not the way I want to win a championship."**
Michael Schumacher after all-but surrendering the F1 title to Fernando Alonso. Who's he trying to kid?
- **"I've never had to worry about squad roatation before - it's a new word for me! I'm going to have to ring up Jose Mourinho and ask him what to do."**
Redknapp on trying to keep everyone happy.
- **"Neither Javier or I have come to West Ham to be saviours or just to make ourselves look good as individuals - this is football not tennis."**
Hammers 'misfit' Carlos Tevez
- **Give it a lash in brief: Rafa Benitez, dissatisfied at only having 743 different striking combinations, is keeping tabs on Palermo's Andrea Caracciolo. Matthew Upson will recover from a ruptured Achilles in time to swap a life of mid-table drudgery with Birmingham for a life of mid-table drudgery with Liverpool when the transfer window opens in January. Ronaldo will become part of a shady trans-Mediterranean trade in portly Brazilians when he leaves for Inter, with Adriano going the other way. And, as if signing Chris Sutton wasn't enough of a thrill, Martin O'Neill will try to lure Javier Saviola from Barcelona.**

Playing on thin ice

GEORGE RYALL

THE untold damage caused by the events of last years international rules test between Ireland and Australia has meant the series is bordering on survival. Without two tight test matches and a full clampdown on last year's violence, we may be about to witness the last series between the two countries for many years. Although a year has passed since Chris Johnson's horrific clothes-line tackle on Philip Jordan, it is a memory which is very fresh in the minds of many Irish supporters, as well as the glaring media spotlight. That incident, as well as the many other reckless acts of basic street violence carried out by the Australians on the Irish players has meant that there is probably more attention and emphasis being put on this series than ever before. Ireland's terrible performance and hammering on the scoreboard as well as on the field of play has not helped the situation either.

However much this series is being surrounded in doom and gloom, there have been significant changes since last year's shambles. The introduction of Sean Boylan as manager of Ireland should mean Ireland will be going out as well prepared as possible, full of pride, hunger and determination, all attributes of Boylan's All-Ireland winning Meath teams of the late eighties and nineties. The make up of Boylan's squad hints at significant change in the shape and tone of the team compared to last year. Boylan seems to have come to the conclusion that the most skilful G.A.A. players don't make the best international rules team. The omission of Colm Cooper and Ross Munally to name but two, is testament to this. This year's squad looks much bulkier to last year and contains six mid-fielders compared to just two in last year's squad. This should help significantly with the chronic lack of target men Ireland suffered from last year. Boylan has also vowed

to improve the Irish teams tackling and releasing of the ball having been tackled, two basic skills which the Australians exploited last year. The naming of Kieran McGeeny as captain may also prove a masterstroke by Boylan. McGeeny, a natural born leader, will get 100% out of every Irish player. The Australians are also showing there intentions of retaining the title by travelling over three days earlier than normal so they can spend over a week training in Killarney to help them get acclimatised, used to the playing conditions and get in plenty of practice with the round ball.

Perhaps most significantly of all is the fact that the players on both teams realise the importance of these two test games. This is the only chance these players get to represent their countries and that is a huge honour for them, an honour they won't want to throw away. It is also the only chance many of these players will get to play together on the same team. For the Irish players who play for the so called "lesser" counties, it is a great chance for them to highlight their skills on the big day and get to run out into a packed Croke Park, something they might only be able to dream of without this series. A training course taken recently by the referees involved in this year's series should also bring about a welcome improvement in the standard of refereeing.

With the first test a 34,000 sell out under lights in Galway and an almost packed Croke Park expected a week later, the demand for the series is still out there. The classic series we were treated to in 2003 and 2004 shows that the international rules series has so much to offer supporters of both countries. Lets just hope that lessons have been learned from last year. Controlled aggression must be maintained at all times and then hopefully we will witness two matches full of skill, pride and drama. After that, an Irish victory would be the icing on the cake.

UL host Hockey Intervarsities

ELLEN BEHAN

IT'S that time of year again and the Hockey Intervarsities are upon us. However this year it will be extra special as we are the proud hosts of this prestigious competition. The intervarsities will take place Tuesday 31st of October to 2nd of November (week 6) and they will play host to both male and female hockey teams hailing from colleges from all 4 provinces.

This year the UL Ladies team has been training exceptionally hard and hope to get a deserved result from the competition. Unfortunately there is no men's team to fly the college flag but the ladies still remain confident that they can do the college proud.

In the ladies group stages, UL will face Cork Institute of Technology, Queens University Belfast, University of Ulster and Trinity College, while University College Cork, Dublin, Galway and Dublin City University will battle it out in the other group. The matches will take place on the astro-turf in UL and in Crescent College Comprehensive school close by.

The UL ladies team will be based in Crescent on

Tuesday, UL on Wednesday and semi-finals will take place in both venues on Thursday. The finals will of course be in UL, Thursday afternoon. The UL team will be counting on as many supporters as possible to come support them throughout the competition. A high standard of Hockey is guaranteed by every team throughout the whole competition.

This year's team is: Niki Sterritt, Carol Hickey, Ellen Behan, Sharon Carey, Ciara Howard, Claire Mulcahy, Katie Horner, Jane Quinlivan, Jen O Loughlin, Aisling McKeon, Jessica Kelliher, Emma O Connell, Sinead McMahon, Leah Kidney, Aoife Kenny and Kim Daly. Team coach is Deirdre Ni Chronin, fitness coach is Noreen O'Connell and team manager is Jean Quinn.

The team would like to thank in advance the organising committee led by Mary Smith. It is greatly appreciated by all; they have been working tirelessly behind the scenes for the last few months. (no name included).

So lastly again don't forget to come and support the team throughout the week, a fantastic display of hockey is guaranteed.

UL SHOTOKAN



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TRAINING EVERY

TUES 6.15 - 8.00 PM

&

THUR 8.15 - 10.00 PM

PESS BUILDING GYM

The Premiership

WITH KEVIN CORCORAN

Celtic are coming

A few years ago it was a common sight in the media to see something involving Celtic's and Rangers' applications to compete in the English Premier League. All of that hype has disappeared now, which was strange considering how determined they seemed to be.



However, it has come to my attention recently that instead of throwing in the towel on the prospect, Celtic have simply decided to use a different approach. Instead of entering through a legitimate route, they have begun to infest the Premiership right under our noses, and they are

using Aston Villa as a 'host' club. Martin O'Neill's entrance to the club sparked this integration process, with Stilian Petrov, Chris Sutton and Didier Agathe following in quick succession. Then it became much more obvious when a week or so ago a headline appeared in which Villa denied any intention of changing their stadium's name. Just how they will explain the introduction of 'Celtic Park' as their new home should be quite amusing.

Fab signs eight year deal

It was surprising to hear that Cesc Fabregas signed a massive eight year contract with the Gunners recently. Praise was heaped on the hugely talented player for his commitment and loyalty. This was strange considering that he ditched his 'beloved' Barcelona just a few short seasons ago, his eyes lighting up when he saw his first professional contract. Obviously he has changed his



mindset since, but still Arsene, don't turn your back on him because Peter Kenyon could be lurking around any corner.

Apology

Some comments made in this column in the last edition of 'An Focal' have caused unrest amongst Manchester City fans within the college. It appears that they caused offence to this sector of the community and they showed the club in a very negative light. So the most professional thing to do is apologize to all Man City fans on campus. So here it goes. I'm sorry George.

Media Hunt uncalled for

SAYS LIAM TOGHER

WE all know that goalkeepers have a far from glamorous job, sometimes having to dive bravely at the feet of attackers whose sole intention is to kick a 50-50 ball hard enough in an attempt to score. The grim realities of the risks associated with this position were plain for us to see during the recent Reading-Chelsea match at the Madejski Stadium, when Chelsea goalie Petr Cech had his skull fractured in a collision with Reading's Irish midfielder Stephen Hunt. While nobody likes to see such an incident, and people were rightly concerned for the wellbeing of the Czech Republic keeper, the media outcry that ensued was not welcome. We could have done without Jose Mourinho's post-match comments, but my ire is

directed towards the mass media.

Once again the British tabloids' modus operandi was to write about an event by blowing it out of proportion and provoking an angry reaction from the public. Some of the malicious articles I have read since the aforementioned match on 14 October disgusted me. They have made a minor court case out of an innocuous accident. Anyone who believes that Hunt intended to knock Cech unconscious must have been watching a different game. No right-thinking person in modern society would deliberately hospitalise another human being, so rather than disliking Hunt for what he did, I actually admire the way in which he has handled such a torrid week. It was bad enough having to live with the consequences of the challenge, but tolerating the

hyperbole of happy-go-lucky columnists is another matter. Hunt, like fellow Reading countrymen Kevin Doyle and Shane Long, is an honest professional who just wants to play the game he loves and not indulge in the shopping bonanzas of other Premiership players. He could do worse than to ignore the shameful criticism that has come his way in trashy tabloid articles.

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Start @ Stables Arch way
Stop 1: Dromroe Village
Stop 2: Thomond Village
Stop 3: Cappavilla Village
Stop 4: Plassey Village
Stop 5: College Court
Stop 6: Courtyard Student Village
Stop 7: Brookfield Student Village
End @ Stables Arch way

Route B: On the half hour***
7:30 8:30 9:30 10:30

Start @ Stables Arch way
Stop 1: Kilmurry Village
Stop 2: Elm Park
Stop 3: Oak Lawns
Stop 4: Kilmurry Lodge
Stop 5: Superquinn
Stop 6: Briarfield
Stop 7: Courtyard/Brookfield Roundabout
End @ Stables Archway

***Milford Grange On Request

Route C:
11:30 Only
All Route A & B Stops on Request
Please note: Route C is a drop-off-only route

Stan the man?

Stephen Daly doesn't think so...

STEVE Staunton's managerial career is a perfect mirror image of Irish International Football, a complete joke. Not only are we second from bottom in the group but we were also humiliated by Cyprus who are ranked 103rd in the world. I know that it's easy to jump on the band wagon at the moment by calling for Staunton's head, but what puzzles me is that where was the national outrage when he was appointed? I suppose his supporters may argue that he was more than qualified to take the reins and to a certain extent that's true. After all he was player/coach at the illustrious and dominant world super power that is Walsall F.C. Let me reiterate that...player/coach! For God's sake the man had no experience what so ever of actually being a manager. His limited experience as a coach lasted for only six months before being officially announced as Brian Kerr's successor. So what the hell did Delaney think they were going to achieve with Stan in charge. After all when you put a monkey in a suit he's still a monkey. As bad as it was having the nation represented by a Dubliner with that musically enchanting accent of his, at least he knew something about football. Even poor old Mick was shafted in my book. Ok so he did piss off Roy Keane but so what? It wasn't his fault that the Man U hard man went off home crying to mammy. If he had any true loyalty to this country he wouldn't have let his oversized ego compromise the entire nation. Now don't get me wrong on that point. I don't mean to say that he would have had any real impact on the pitch. After all he was already a geriatric has-been with dodgy knees, but the disruption he caused within the camp certainly can't have helped. Although the green army certainly proved they could survive without the Cork man his antics must have planted seeds of doubt in the player's minds about the manager's competence. Despite leading us to the second round in Japan where we only lost on penalties to Spain, McCarthy was used as a sacrificial lamb to justify a poor start to the Euro qualifiers and perhaps more accurately, to appease the United faithful led by the wonderfully 'enlightened' Eamon Dunphy.

So what has changed? Kerr was sacked for failing to

qualify despite getting some credible results yet Staunton has lost his opening two qualifiers including being destroyed by Cyprus and yet he remains in his post. The draw against the Czechs was a step in the right direction but

Taking the blade to Staunton is just like cutting the weed. If you don't pull from the root it will simply crop up again.

So what is to become of Irish football? Unfortunately the future doesn't look bright. With every day that Staunton



lets face it, they're a team in transition and when the likes of Jan Koller are still playing they can't be taken seriously on the international stage. For God's sake even Brian Kennedy has more talent than Koller! Now that I come to think of it that raises a somewhat interesting comparison. The F.A.I is a bit like the Eurovision Committee at the moment. You intentionally scrape out from the bottom of the barrel in order to assure failure. Let's look at the comparisons. Those muppets from Athlone and Staunton. Both are completely lacking even an inkling of talent and make a complete laughing stock out of us across the international stage. Which brings us to another interesting point? Stay with me there's a method to my madness. If the selection process of choosing a candidate for the Euro Vision was changed from the wonderfully entertaining You're A Flop, then perhaps the same should be done as regards selecting the Irish supremo. After all Delaney is nothing more than a stagnant and putrid resident in FAI headquarters. So thus the solution is right in front of us and is surprisingly simple. Flush away the bad tenant! Get rid of Delaney and his cronies so we can reform the institution from within.

stays in charge and the FAI hierarchy remains in charge we slide further and further down the hill of the Fifa World Ranking system. With each foothold we lose, it becomes more and more difficult for us to ever qualify for a major International competition again as our seeding level drops. Although we are determined to have an Irishman in the hot seat it is perhaps time to look for some outside perspective. The problem with ex players is loyalty to the old guard which was exactly Clare's downfall in the Hurling Championship. But it is important we choose the right outside perspective. It says it all when the names being linked to the job include Terry 'El Tel' Venables and John Toshack! The appointment for Sir Bobby Robson as Staunton's mentor was ridiculous and although I am genuinely sympathetic to his plight at the moment he's too senile to be involved in management anymore. The example we should be aspiring to is someone like Gus Hiddink. He performed miracles with South Korea and Australia and now he's turning Russia around. So to summarise, Staunton's performance as manager is nothing more than we could ever have expected. A disaster.

Stan Makes His Point

Tomás McCarthy decides to give the man a chance

FAIR play to Steve Staunton and the Irish team for restoring some pride back into the jersey against the Czech Republic. It does not make up for the 'Nightmare In Nicosia' but at

least now we have something to build on.

From the first whistle the Irish tore into the Czechs. It reminded me of Jack Charlton's motto of 'put them under pressure'. Tackles came flying in and you could see the Czechs were rattled. Lee Carsley was a true enforcer in the middle more than justifying his recall. He showed the attitude for a battle, exactly what is needed in the Irish midfield. With five in the middle we were extremely solid and better balanced. Douglas gave it his all beside Carsley and was not afraid to put a tackle in either. Special mention though to Kevin Kilbane. He always gives 110 per cent for Ireland. He is not blessed with special talents but he works incredibly hard for the team.

Biggest improvement though came in defence. Paul McShane for a debutant was outstanding marking Jan Koller out of the game. McShane has real courage and determination and this spirit

brought out the best in John O'Shea beside him. Credit too Finnan and Kelly who never gave an inch. The defence as a unit was solid and if I was Steve Staunton I would just swap Richard Dunne for O'Shea the next day.

Pity we didn't get the three points we deserved. We are probably now out of the picture in terms of qualification. Robbie Keane and Damien Duff are still not producing it. Duff in fairness tries hard but at the moment is low on confidence. Robbie meanwhile is a pale shadow of his former self. All Robbie does these days is complain to refs, he is no good for the team.

All in all a very positive result in Lansdowne. More importantly the fans responded well to Staunton. They certainly created an intimidating atmosphere that is needed at all our games. So lets stop complaining and moaning and get behind Stan and the Irish team.

Photographers!



Want your work immortalised in a calendar?

Send all humorous and/or interesting photos to deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie with 'Calendar' in the subject line.

Closing date for entries Monday Week 7

The Limerick Association of Students' Unions calendar will be produced in conjunction with MICSU, LITSU and LSADSU and will be on sale later this semester.