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Ollscoil Luimnigh

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Spanish students in UL remember bomb victims with Courtyard Vigil

By: Ana Cuevas Romo

After the terrorist attack that happened last Thursday March 11th in Madrid, Spanish students and workers of the University of Limerick came together in an act of remembrance and solidarity with the victims and their families.

There were differing opinions regarding who was the author of such an attack, but there was a common feeling: the feeling of impotence, and the belief that tragedies like this should never happen.

Students wanted to show their support for the victims' families and their opposition to terrorism. Therefore, in co-ordination with University personnel, they organised a demonstration against terrorism. In front of the ULSU, at 6:00 on Friday afternoon, they gathered around signs asking for

peace, white paper hands (a symbol of opposition to terrorism in Spain), and candles representing the victims. Not only were there Spanish Erasmus students, but there were also other Spanish people living in Limerick city and friends from other countries. All of them kept five minutes of silence remembering the victims, listened to two poems dedicated to the victims and finished singing "Libertad (freedom)", a song against violence.

The demonstration took place at the same time as the marches in many cities in Spain, where millions of people stopped what they were doing to express their solidarity. And the students of Limerick, even though they were far away, brought themselves closer to their people with this demonstration.



LYRICS FROM THE SONG (SPANISH)

Libertad, libertad
sin ira libertad,
guárdate tu miedo y tu ira
porque hay libertad,
sin ira libertad,
y si no la hay sin duda la habrá.

(ENGLISH)

Freedom, freedom
Without anger freedom,
Keep away your fear and your anger,
Because there is freedom,
Without anger freedom,
And if there isn't, without a doubt there
will be.

News

Clubs and Societies Awards



St Vincent de Paul Society

The Clubs and Societies Ball and Awards took place on Thursday of Week four in the South Court Hotel. Huge numbers of people descended on the hotel for the Annual Ball, with representatives from almost every club and society, ULSU exec, the Sports Department, the Arts Office and the Counselling Service. Some of the attendees were not recognisable by virtue of not wearing tracksuits! The South Court, as usual, delivered the goods where the food was concerned.

After a delicious dinner, the awards for the Best Clubs and Societies, Events and People over the year were announced. Paul Lee, the Clubs and Societies Development Officer, presided over the affair, while Patricia Moriarty (Arts Officer) presented awards to Society winners and Neasa O'Donnell (Sports Administrator) bestowed the honours on Club worthies.

The first awards were those of Best New or Improved Club or Society. The winners in the Clubs category were the Camogie Club, recent intervarsity champions. On the Societies side, the Drama Soc edged out stiff competition from Out in UL and CompSoc to take the trophy. They then performed a song from their recent production of Little Shop of Horrors.

Club and Society Events of the Year were up next, and Sailing Club were deemed worthy of the award for their hosting of the National Intervarsities.

On the Society side, St Vincent de Paul took the prize for their trip to Haiti.

Club and Society Person of the year is always a difficult choice, when so many people devote their time and energy to their clubs and societies. The winner in the Society category was Timmy Hennessy of St Vincent de Paul, and the Club award went to Don Maher of the Kayak Club.

The coveted titles of Club and Society of the Year were up next. KickBoxing club walked away with the Club of the Year award, and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul completed a Lord of the Rings-like clean sweep by becoming Society of the Year, winning every award they were nominated for.

The last two awards of the night are possibly the most special. They are given to students who have done the most for clubs or societies as a whole over the course of their time in UL. The Mike Sadlier memorial award was given to Bernadette Sexton in recognition of her work for both the Irish Peace Society, and for Societies as a whole. The Jason Hackett Memorial Award is given to someone who has worked for Clubs. UL Clubs and Societies were very grateful to Jason's sister, who attended the ball and presented the award to Don Maher of the Kayak Club. Both Don and Bernadette received a standing ovation from a jubilant function room.

Every single club, society and person who was nominated for an award has had an outstanding year, but no one could begrudge the winners.

After the ceremony, the lights went down and the band kicked off, and festivities continued until the wee hours of the morning. But, like the Oscars, it might be better to leave the stories on the grapevine, where they belong!

Irish Blood Transfusion Service to be banned from UL campus?

The Class Reps Council of UL Students' Union will on Tuesday the 23rd consider a motion prohibiting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service from campus because of their ban on taking blood from gay men. The ban which has not been reviewed since the 1980s has been the subjects of a campaign by the students of UL against the prohibition.

The campaign started last year when 700 UL students signed a petition against the ban. The Students' Union along with the "Out in UL" Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Society have organised many meetings and dialogues on the issue with the IBTS but have been unable to come to agreement on the issue of the ban. According to Students' Union Welfare Officer David Garrahy "We have been disappointed with the position of the IBTS in relation to this ban. We feel it is time to change the criteria for gay men donating blood based on the changing

demographics of infection among the gay community".

The original ban on blood donation from gay men was implemented during the high incidence of HIV among the gay community in the 1980s. Since then, however, vigilance and increased knowledge has meant that now about 80% of new cases of HIV are among the heterosexual community and there was a 30% alone reduction in infection last year. However the decrease in infection has not changed how the ban is implemented. This means that gay men without any possibility of infection by the disease and who have regular testing are not eligible to donate.

The motion will express its concerns to the IBTS on the issue and seek a derogation from the ULSU Equality Policy which bans any discrimination on the grounds of Sexual Orientation, in order to allow the IBTS on campus.

Mental Health Awareness Days a Success

Wednesday and Thursday of week four witnessed a two-day campaign on the issue of mental health. Welfare Officer David Garrahy and the welfare committee undertook the campaign. Events that took place included a talk on depression by 2FM d.j. Gareth O'Callaghan, and Declan Ahern of the Counselling service in U.L., a video screening of "A Beautiful Mind" and a postcard campaign in association with Amnesty International to lobby the government to invest more money into mental health areas in Ireland.

The most successful of these events was without a doubt the talk given by Gareth O'Callaghan. Such was the unbelievable turnout that at the last minute a change of venue had to be called for. Mr O'Callaghan spoke at length, and with considerable ease of his own bout of depression and how he overcame it. For everyone present it was the most inspirational of talks and his honesty is something, which is very rare in this county when one speaks of issues such as depression and its associated illnesses. The issue of depression is one which many people fear and neglect to talk about through both ignorance and shame but hopefully if people can learn more about it, then the stigma that has been attached to it for many years will disappear and we can eventually reach a stage where people understand and

accept that many people suffer in silence with this invisible pain and a smile can hide a heart filled with pain and suffering. It is important to recognise the symptoms and to talk about things that are bothering you and getting you down



Gareth O'Callaghan

because Pandora's box can only hold so much and eventually it will reach the point where all the emotions we keep locked up will spill over. For anyone who is worried about themselves or a friend or family member help is always available and in U.L. there is both the Welfare Officer and the counselling service.

Depression is nothing to be ashamed of, it is merely a fact of life

Peer Supported Learning Groups An Innovative Approach to Learning in UL! Non-Traditional Tutoring Programme Run for Students BY Students

You might be surprised to realize how much we can learn from each other. Research has proven that collaborative learning is a very effective study technique. When collaborative learning is directed by students who previously and successfully completed the same modules as the participants, it is a powerful learning strategy. This type of learning is referred to as peer-supported learning.

Peer-Supported Learning Groups (PSLG) are formed when students come together over a cup of tea to compare notes, discuss course content, exchange strategies for learning, predict exam questions and formulate answers in a collaborative manner. In this relaxed environment, students engage in active thinking, analysing, learning, and problem-solving activities, thus developing these cognitive skills, which are essential for college success.

*"Tell me, and I forget,
Show me, and I remember,
Involve me, and I understand"*
Chinese Proverb

Participation in PSLG sessions is voluntary and open to all students in a targeted course. The sessions are directed by trained PSLG leaders, students who took the same modules the

previous year. The leaders facilitate and encourage the group to process the material rather than teach the participants - They function as model students rather than authority figures. Peer-supported learning benefits all participants, even the leaders.

Dr. Hussain Mahdi (hussain.mahdi@ul.ie) of the Department of Electronics and Computer Engineering initiated PSLG sessions three years ago for first-year BTech IT&T and ES students as a response to poor grades. His findings have generally shown that regular attendees of PSLG sessions perform considerably better in exams than students who don't attend.

PSLG sessions have started this semester once again for first-year BTech IT&T and ES students in C2061 at the following times:

Wednesday 1pm - 2pm directed by second-year students Morgan McElligott and Cian Gogarty

Thursday 2pm - 3pm directed by second-year students Dermot Butterfield and Mahsa Nouri

For further information about peer-supported learning, contact Emer Keating, Student Support Centre Coordinator in the Department of Electronics and Computer Engineering (emer.keating@ul.ie)

News

Quality Entertainments depend on Student Behaviour

An open meeting to discuss the possibility of holding a large end-of-term event was held this Monday evening and was attended by students, residents, community Gardaí, representatives from the Scholars Club and PCC.

During this meeting, the extent of the grievances of the non-student residents of certain estates became clear as individual people told their stories of damage to property, sleepless nights, and alleged harassment. People were also quick to point out that most students are

decent people, but that a lot of the disturbances happen at night or when people have been drinking.

ULSU representatives stated that they did not condone any disruptive behaviour of this kind, and that any the planning of future entertainments by ULSU would involve entering into dialogue with local interest groups, especially the residents' associations.

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing the possibility of holding a large-scale event at the end of term.

General consensus from those present was that, although the outlined event was well-planned, the behaviour of students during Kollege Week would be an indicator as to how things might go in the future. The fewer disturbances, the better chance of top-class on-campus festival entertainment being able to go ahead.

The onus of responsibility with regard to behaviour was laid squarely on individual students and it was made clear that, while dialogue was welcome between all parties, it had to result in

positive change before any big Ent's gigs could be considered.

Eoin Ó Broin, ULSU President, said "This could well be the first time a meeting such as this was held in the history of the University, which can only be a positive step."

The next meeting will be held at 6.30pm, Monday Week 8 in the Students' Union. All are welcome.

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ulsu presents

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Keep your eyes on An Focal for more special Offers in the next edition

Election Feature

An Overview of the Role of President

Students' Union President of the University of Limerick is an all encompassing role, which covers a broad range of areas. It is closer to the job of a managing/organiser than a campaigning political leader as can be seen from the job description below. However persons having both skills would really excel.

Can you motivate students to stand up for their rights, while holding your own at a meeting of the University Governing Authority while also ensuring that all facets of the Union are functioning correctly?

If so give it a go. Rewards are the job satisfaction that arises from this position plus an immense experience in everything from insurance to meeting Government Ministers.

Given the financial turmoil ULSU has been in for the last few months' things will be tight for this coming year. It will be 2005/2006 before the cuts and new revenue generating measures kick in. As such it will be a year of consolidating the accountancy reporting, shop management & staff management made. However campaigns don't cost much so there would be ample opportunity for

the pursuit of a better Medical Centre, a better counseling service, better Student Services or the litany of issues on Campus. The main requirement is motivation and a clear open agenda. If you think you can keep the ship afloat but also make a difference have a go. The only thing to bear in mind is that the SU is a direct democracy. Members tell their Class Reps what they want who in turn tell the SU Executive what to do at Class Reps Council. This bottom up approach means that progress can be slow on some issues and also that if the membership does not support an

initiative it doesn't happen. It also means that for something to be policy the Students' must support it. All contracts signed must be approved by the SU Exec while all policy and structural decisions must be ratified by Council.

That said the perks are being a "man/woman about town" for the year, radio interviews, meeting Student Leaders, politicians and business persons from around the country, a fully equipped office and the glory that comes with being the President of University of Limerick Student' Union!!

The Responsibilities of the ULSU President

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The president shall be responsible for the following

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1. SERVICES

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Student Unions traditionally provide services to their members that the University doesn't provide. The president should bring him/herself up to speed on the state, feasibility & benefit of the services provided and look to expand and consolidate the range. One obvious way to explore service provision and performance is to investigate what is on offer in other similar sized colleges. The main ULSU services have been Ents, Clubs & Societies, the SU Shop, Pool Tables, accident insurance cover for members, legal representation to members & printing though it is worth bearing in mind that Welfare & Education are also considered services.

ENTS

Over the last 3 years ULSU has employed an ents manager on a contract basis. A list of events to be organised is agreed at the start of the year.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

ULSU is the only Union in the country that administers Clubs & Societies completely autonomously from the University. The president is a member of Clubs & Societies Executive and must appoint the chair of Clubs & Socs Council. Clubs & Socs pay 40% of the Presidents wages and as such want a return for their money.

SHOP

The shop is constituted as a separate legal entity though wholly owned by the SU and has a board of directors, and a shop manager who reports directly to the chair of the board. The SU president will have an equal role with the other directors in overseeing the running of the shop though can be called in as the "boss" when dealing with suppliers & staff and is a channel for grievances students have with shop to the Board.

2. FINANCE

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The Union's income streams are

predominantly captivation & subventions from the University and are supplemented by income from the Students Centre & the games room. Until very recently other potential profit making areas (the shop, ents, printshop, and job agency) have been loss making. One rule of thumb to consider when looking for additional revenue sources is to target all places that students spend money.

The president will have to be aware of bank balances, adherence to budgets, regular financial reporting to exec & council and the day to day handling of cash in the Union.

3. REPRESENTATION

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Representation of members occurs at 5 levels: College, local, city, national and international.

In reverse order international representation would be as a delegate to a meeting of say the European Education Forum, National representation would be at FUSU or with the Government over fees, minimum wage, privatisation etc., City representation would be with the local authorities over public transport, waste collection, or with the local media commenting on issues relating to youth or at LASU, Community representation would be with local residents and organisations and college level would be the multitude of committees which govern UL.

These are some of the main Committees which the President (along with other SU Reps) generally attends.

Stables Club, Sports Arena Club & Scholars Club: (2-4 reps per committee)
Student Centre Management Committee: (2 SU Reps)

PCC Board of Directors: (1 Rep)

Sports Arena BOD: (2 Reps)

Governing Authority: (2 SU Members)

Finance sub committee of GA: 1Rep

Campus Development Sub Committee of GA: (1 Rep)

Library Development Sub Committee of Governing Authority.

Nominating Sub Committee of GA:

Alcohol Policy Working Group: (2 Reps)

Taskforce on Student Affairs: (1 SU

Rep)

Boathouse Building Committee: (4 SU Reps)

Academic Council: (Pres & Education)

Discipline Committee: (2 SU Reps)

Conferrings: (President & Deputy)

Residents Forum: (3 SU Reps)

Other committees that are shared between the sabbatical officers are:

Visual Arts Committee:

Coiste na Gaeilge:

Environmental Committee:

Marketing Committee:

Program for Prosperity & Fairness Partnership Committee:

Catering Committee:

Campus Watch Committee

LASU(Limerick Association of Students' Unions)

FUSU:

Those are the committees you have to go to. After that there are all the meetings you arrange yourself to push the SU agenda. These can involve one to one meetings with Deans, Vice Presidents, Presidents, and heads of departments.

4. ORGANISATION

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The President will have to approve and even organise training for Staff when needed, training for the 4 elected sabbatical officers over the summer, training for the SU Executive and for the Clubs & Societies Executive in October and the administration days for Class Reps Council and Clubs and Socs Council.

The President will also have to approve and even arrange recruitment of staff.

The president will have to familiarise themselves with Union Insurance Policies, Union Legal Representation, Union Financial Auditors, Union Bank & Credit Union accounts, Union Staff Contracts, Union Safety Statement and Union Evacuation Procedures.

Sometimes the president even needs to lock up at night;=)

Class Reps Council is the "parliament" of the Students' Union. It meets fortnightly. The president must give a fortnightly report to Council and work with the Class Reps Development Officer to ensure the smooth running of Council. This of the forum where policy changes and the merits of new

initiatives are debated.

The president is chair of the Union Executive Committee and as such must arrange weekly meetings and ensure a follow through of Action Items.

5. CO-ORDINATION

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Co ordination between the different arms of the Union is also in the Presidents remit.. This co ordination can be helped through Union Line Managers meeting which is a monthly staff/sabbatical officer plenary.

6. INITIATION OF POLICY

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Most ULSU policies date to 1992 are in need of review. However their core message remains relevant and refers to areas such as Education, Welfare, Communication, Clubs & Socs, Trading, Services, Equality & the Environment. There are also mandates the SU has been bound to pursue by council or general meeting such as the encouragement of the removal of Nestle products from campus, an investigation into the impact of the WTO GATS Agreement on Higher Education & regular financial reporting to council. There are many areas the Su has no policies such as I.T. & Staff. Below are some leading questions as regards policy areas for exploration.

How should ents be run?

Should the SU have a photocopying service?

What about bilingual policy, minimum wage policy, environmental policy?

Should there be 4 class reps per class?

Should UL be part of USI, FUSU & LASU?

What hours should SU building open?

Should SU employ a Graphic Designer?

Should SU president be chief spokesperson for Union?

There it is. Any more questions call in to me. Inevitably next years President will have to prioritise and perhaps a good way to do that would be to discuss the above job description at Council. By next year there will be a new Students' Union Constitution to make the running of Council & the Union more efficient too. Sin é, glac leis nó glac go réidh!

Election Feature

Bartenders Required for Limerick City Pub.

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ULSU Sabbatical Elections to take place Week 8

It's coming up to that time of year again, and I'm not talking about Kollege Week! The ULSU sabbatical elections will take place on Wednesday of Week 8. Candidates will contest the positions of President, Deputy President/Welfare, Vice President/Education and Vice President/Communications and Campaigns. Nominations will be open between 10am, Tuesday March 30th and 5pm Thursday April 1st. Hustings will take place on Monday of Week 8 (Time and Place to be

determined). This is where all candidates must make a speech and answer questions about their manifesto and policies. Polling will take place all day on Wednesday of Week 8 (April 7th) in the Main Canteen. Other locations for polling may be announced. Only registered students of UL may vote, and voters will be asked to produce a valid UL ID card. The organisation of the election, the supervision of voting and counting, and the announcing of results is the

responsibility of the Returning Officer, Gemma Nolan (Class Reps Development Officer). All disputes will be mediated by her and her decision is final. Elected candidates will finish out the current academic year, they will then spend the last two weeks in June training with their predecessor, before taking office properly on July 1st. These two pages will tell it like it is in the Union, so that prospective candidates will have some idea what they're getting themselves in for!

Getting Yourself Elected: The Basics

Nominations for the ULSU Sabbatical Elections open on Tuesday of Week 7. Forms are available from the Returning Officer, Gemma Nolan. Her office is SU-117, which is upstairs in the Students' Union building. Nominations close at 5pm on Thursday of Week 7 (April 1st). Candidates must be proposed by 15 Union Members and seconded by 30 Union Members. The Official

nomination papers must contain, as well as the required number of proposers and seconders, the candidate's name as registered with the University, I.D. number, Course, and finally the name of the candidate's Agent or Campaign Manager. Candidates must pay a deposit of €40 with their nomination form. This will be refunded to them if they run a genuine campaign.

So you want to be Education Officer

Are you completely MAD!!! (Excuse the pun I couldn't help it. When asked to write this I said well, well, well... why, why, oh why did I do it!!! Hindsight is 20/20 they say so my advise to ye all is...

Don't do it, save your sanity and your life!!!!

Do I mean that I keep asking myself??? Yeah I do but not all of the time. This job is like every job and no job you'll ever have. Sounds like a cliché but it can be the most depressing job and the most rewarding, a paradox in itself.

You meet every student under the sun from the diligent to the devil may care. You meet some deadly headers and some absolute plonkers. But such is life and you just have to grin and bear it!!! My policy is honesty is best so forgive me if you're wondering what I'm at!!!

Money wise- well you are not going to save anything lets put it like that. We're the lowest paid sabbats in the country even Tipperary IT with almost 500 students gets paid more, but you don't do it for the money!!! You do it to help, to try and sort out all the things that always bugged you about this place. You do it to make a difference. This year was a challenge at the beginning you feel lost, no 2 ways about it, it's a high learning curve and that's only the beginning!!!

But you learn so much, experience so much and feel all the better for the knowledge. It's a lot to do with money too and inheriting an **, ***.00 debt was no fun let me tell ye. And the University are broke too don't forget so its not the easiest job this year!!!

So what does this job consist of?

Education issues: I sit on just over 30 committees not all of them are weekly, don't worry!! Personal cases come in the door (when people can catch you) every day .

Personal cases come by email in their droves from students needing help from as far away as Australia and Cavan!!

I try and get as many exam papers as possible into my office...

You end up ringing the Administrators, staff and Lecturers all the time while never meeting them face-to-face

You have to ensure on behalf of the student body that the University maintains the highest educational standard at all times. Monitoring course curriculums, lecturing standards, academic appeals and observing the tutor system would all fall under this part of the Education portfolio.

You are director of ULSU Services i.e. the shop

You sit on the management committees of the clubs, (Stables and Scholars) on campus.

You also sit on the SU Executive, in Class Reps and on the Education Committee.

I wont keep babbling on because the job description is all on www.ulsu.ul.ie but seriously needs to be updated because the Education Officer has been co-opted on to way more committees since then.

The most important piece of advice I can give you is that you are running a business of sorts. You are not here solely as the Education Officer. There is way more to this job than that which I discovered the hard way. You have to be aware of your finances and your budgets and work really hard to ensure that the business is successful.

You make great friends. And if you're lucky you can work with 3 class people like Eoin, Dave and Sarah who keep you looking on the bright side or alternatively are down in the dumps with you. It's kind of a "one for all, all for one" scenario.

So guys my advice is go for it, sure we'll have sorted out the major issues so that the place will run a lot more smoothly next year!!! **I double dare you!!!**

Being Welfare Officer

Giving something back. I guess that was the notion I had when I first decided to put my name forward for the position of Welfare Officer. I saw the huge impact that the Students' Union had to potential to have on individual students life as the best way to give something back, to make things better for the students. This is not the place to be debating whether or not I have done as much as I would have liked to achieve that to but to explain how you as Welfare Officer could potentially do the same thing. The simple fact is that as Welfare Officer you are given a huge potential to have a positive impact on people's lives. Whether that be through campaigns, meeting individual students or just by being there for someone when they need you, it is a great and special gift to be able to help them.

There is no doubt that it can be an emotionally draining experience though, you will go through a range of emotions, both joy and sadness, hope and frustration,

but you will always go home after a day's (and sometimes night's!) work and feel a sense of fulfilment.

The qualities necessary for a Welfare Officer are more in the person than any experience they may have. You need to be an emotionally strong person while also being able to talk and empathise with those who seek your help. In any job in the Students' Union you need the ability to be a self starter and a leader, able to draw people around you to form a team, because so much depends on you, as a person. But most of all you need a strong idealism and a desire to achieve that will survive the knocks that usually come.

I would encourage any of you reading this article to explore within yourself whether you have these talents. The best people are often those who don't put their name forward so any of you who are even considering it to call into me in the office to talk it over, just to chat.

CCO: The Job for You?

Communications and Campaigns, or should that be Campaigns and Communications?? This could quite possibly be the sabbatical position with the most scope, and the least realisation of its potential. The CCO is a superhero-type sabbatical who fights the double pronged enemies of Ignorance and Apathy on the one hand, while performing the incredible task of editing and laying out An Focal every fortnight on the other.

But seriously, folks. The CCO is the person responsible for all Union Publications, the Website, poster, email newsletters and for the dissemination of all Union information. S/he is also responsible for the co-ordination and implementation of all Union campaigns, and the formulation of Union Communications Policy.

An Focal: This is the one thing the CCO is probably most known for. Infamous for typos, errors and omissions, the student newspaper is the thing that takes up most of the CCO's time. The reason for this is that s/he has to lay the paper out themselves. It's not that difficult to learn the basics, but it IS quite time-consuming. Other than that, all you need to do is find writers, keep them writing, and try not to get sued (Touch Wood!). The fact that I'm writing this article at 4.43am on a Tuesday, having gotten about 4 hours sleep since Saturday probably illustrates the biggest drawback of the job. Of course, if you decide to go for the position, you can change the whole thing, pay someone to lay out the paper, and

give yourself weekends off and way more time to do campaigns.

Campaigns: To run successful campaigns you need to be able to get people's attention, motivate people, talk to people, inspire people, impress people and keep people around you. Your election campaign is the first test, pass that one, and you know you can do the job!

Another important part of campaigns is dealing with the media, doing interviews, sending out press releases and fielding phone calls from journalists. Sometimes, if you're very lucky, you get to be on TV (hopefully for the right reasons!)

Asides from these areas, the CCO sits on committees like ULSU Exec and Class Reps, Stables and Scholars Management Committees, Student Centre Management Committee, UL Marketing Committee, and this year I also sat on Coiste Na Gaeilge.

The bottom line:

Running for Sabbatical elections is not something you can undertake lightly. It's an entire year of your life where you don't do much else other than be a sabbatical officer. It's a crazy year. It's a difficult year. It's a life-changing year. It's a headwrecking year. It's a rewarding year, and it's a year you'll never forget. And I almost forgot to mention that it looks damn good on your CV. If you are serious about running for CCO, feel free to call in and chat with me about the joys and sorrows of it all. And if you decide to go ahead with it, good luck!

Features and Opinion

A Letter from a UL Student in Spain

To all who care for Peace,
Thursday last, I lay asleep in Salamanca when the trains exploded. On waking up I heard a phone conversation of angry sobs through the walls, I feared one of my flat-mates had received bad news from home on Tenerife. It was only when I went for a coffee before class in the faculty's silent cafeteria when I saw those images on the television screen that no eyes should ever have to see. A middle aged man with a quaking voice told me that what I was seeing before me was occurring in Madrid, two and a half hours away down the road, or trainline.

My eyes welled up, I thought of all who were there and of all of those people who I have meet and know who may have been on those trains, then stopped, because in times like that it doesn't bear thinking about. I visited both Alcalá de Henares and Madrid in October last.

Such a cowardly act, remote control murder on public transport, is devastatingly disgusting, a crime against all human life. Salamanca has the same relationship with Madrid that Maynooth has with Dublin. There are people missing from these streets, people who should be studying in these libraries who are no more. That evening of the 11th I visited the thousands of origami doves that had flocked in the centre of the Plaza Mayor. Palpable pain paced the pavement beside me, not knowing where to go but finding shelter in each of us.

Returning home, all of us gathered around the television to try and get some information about who was responsible for the attacks. Ángel Acebes, the Minister for the Interior, pushed the blame on the Basque separatist paramilitary group, E.T.A. We later learned that this had been ordered by the President of the Government, José María Aznar, even though there was a steady flow of evidence coming in that Al Qaeda was responsible and that an E.T.A. representative had denied their responsibility.

The Popular Party government, had been increasing pro-nationalist and anti-Basque separatist propaganda in the weeks before the attacks. Aznar was also Bush's accessory in the Iraq invasion, dragging Spain into the illegal war, while between 90 and 94% of Spaniards were vehemently opposed to such a pernicious prospect.

While people waited for the identification of their lost loved ones in the morgues of the capital, Aznar coldly calculated that if the news of Al Qaeda's responsibility was made public it may harm the Popular Party's possibilities of retaining government in the elections that were only three days away. Imagine losing your daughter, father, brother or girlfriend and then being lied to by the very people who are supposed to ensure your well-being, unforgivable but unfortunately unsurprising when we think of the logic of such politicians.

The next day posters everywhere shouted "E.T.A. NO", "Al Qaeda NO", "No to Terrorism, No to War", "Justice for the cowardly assassins" and "Peace" among others. Black ribbons and arm-bands branded our mourning. Candles quivered in every public place. At 7.00pm 11

million of us flooded the streets of Spain in a raging . We numbered 200,000 in Salamanca alone, every street in the centre was full, the march that we all turned up for couldn't be marched as the entire circuit was congested by our condemnation of all fear and violence.

That night the Al Qaeda claim of responsibility and the E.T.A. denial were still not being aired on Spanish television, moreover the programme scheduling was changed to make way for a film about the atrocities of E.T.A., an emotional film about those who have suffered from the Basque extremists. As an Irish man whose mother was nearly a victim of the Dublin bombings, whose friend was nearly killed in the Omagh bombing and whose sister was working in Washington on September 11th 2001, I completely sympathise with all victims of terrorism and war. What I also resent is the type of emotional engineering that occurs after such atrocities. The showing of the film about E.T.A. when the authorities here were conscious of Al Qaeda's responsibility is a despicable act of insidious deception, comparable with the showing of footage depicting Palestinian children celebrating another occasion, years before the 9-11 attacks, to a grief-stricken U.S. audience in the throes of pain on that fateful day. Powers who do that read emotions like stock markets, investing in hate when fear makes a market. They do however show their true face and most people are not blind enough to miss it.

What followed in Madrid were massive protests outside the Popular Party headquarters. The mourners wanted the truth to be told, they were met by the police. Mariano Rajoy, the would-be successor of Aznar, demanded the dispersion of the crowd calling it an "illegal protest" on the eve of the democratic elections that he was supposed to be trying to win. It was only after midnight that Acebes appeared on our screens again to announce that three Morrocans and two Indians had been arrested for in connection with the killings. Al Qaeda were still not named. On Sunday over 80% of the voting population cast their votes, the highest election turn-out in Spanish history. Not only for themselves, but for all of us who have always realised that war and terrorism are one and the same, the Spanish people have begun to hoe away the weeds of war, preparing for the ploughing of the battlefield. They voted against hate and racism, kicking the filo-fax fascists out with a firm democratic Dr. Marten. In doing so I see them having finally lanced the spectre of Franco years.

The PSOE (Spanish Socialist and Workers Party) will soon form government with some of the other left wing parties. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero is the new leader of Spain and he has reaffirmed to treat terrorism at its root, namely by stopping people be driven to their extreme. He will withdraw the Spanish troops from Iraq by June 31st unless the U.N. take control of the mess there beforehand. The sincere and solemn cultured conscienciousness of the Spanish people has assured that their



country will emerge from the bosom of the most dangerous alliance of racism and violence to lead the world in dealing with the vicissitudes of our times in the only effective way, through dialogue and exclusively peaceful means.

I feel the wound left by last Thursday's bombings and I commend the Spaniards for their reflex action that wrested the hand of power from throwing salt at it. We all have a responsibility to keep this wound clean until it closes and when our own democracies can be discharged from the emergency wards.

My faith in democracy as a tool of honest representation has been shaken in recent years for the following reasons. We have seen Clinton take the credit for and then insult our Irish Peace process by the construction of a 'Raytheon' plant, a Tomahawk cruise missile component factory down the road from my secondary school in Derry.

We have watched as Blair suspended the democratic institutions and elections in the North-East of my country, leading to the polarisation of the society again. We all watched in anguish as he subsequently coerced our neighbours into the Iraq war. Painfully we watched our own Taoiseach Ahern ignore our intelligent rejection of the Nice Treaty in our referendum of 2001, as a result of his bullying in the last referendum he has now ceded our sovereignty to Brussels, confirming the death of our still-born Republic. On top of this he broke our constitution in allowing the U.S. warplanes to refuel on our turf in spite of the opposition of the majority of the Irish people. More recently he has continued the negation of our proper culture by excluding the Irish language as an official language of the European Union. This leaves me feeling that official Ireland is now no more than a stone in the Anglo-American soup.

On the other side of the ocean we have seen the political poachers behind Bushes bend the electoral system to take control of the world's most powerful nation with a minority of votes giving way to the most dangerous times I have ever lived through. The only significant positive movements forward on the representation of public sentiment, before last Sunday, were provided by Mexico and Chile's refusal to change their rejection of the U.S. backed U.N. Security Resolution which would have legalised Operation Oil Grab while the world community was in the streets protesting against it. That particular time produced the largest protest in Irish history.

The Spanish people have shown me that maybe this state of affairs has a viable remedy, solidarity against all violence

and the exposure of lies. We can all learn from their dignity. Is this the beginning of a new Hispanic intellectual hegemony in our world? I don't know, that is a question for the likes of Noam Chomsky, I am just glad to be among these people of great conviction, I am their student.

I hope that those who are attempting to oust Bush this November are learning from Zapatero's trustworthy humility and promise to end the violence at its root.

I hope that John Kerry can re-orientate his focus away from measuring muscles and medals with Bush and remember the essence of what he was part of when he first arrived in Washington D.C. after Vietnam. That history needs to repeat itself, time to stop the insanity again. End the war, withdraw the troops from Iraq, stop supplying the Israeli state with U.S. manufactured murdering machinery. The only way for the U.S. and U.K. and their cohorts to regain respectability on the world stage is to deal with terrorism at its root. Dismantle the weapons industry and remove their soldiers from Ireland, Palestine and Iraq. End the Coca-colonisation of our societies.

Change the dependency on oil and explore technologies that do not take lives. Replace the daggers with dialogue. In Ireland we have seen that peace is possible and although in the past few years it has seen set-backs, we know that with real moves on all sides towards demilitarisation the communities can do the rest themselves. The November elections in the U.S.A. are about much more than Wrestle-mania style politics or any one person's career. Kerry has a unique opportunity to let the Bush administration expose themselves for the lying murderers that they are. We live in hope that this happens before another tragedy occurs.

While sitting in a café with some friends from Asturias last Friday, one of them received a phone call from the woman who they work for who had just found out that two of her cousins had died in the blasts.

still don't know if anybody I know was hurt or killed on one of the trains last Thursday, some of the bodies have still not been identified. One of my friends Mario normally takes that train every morning, luckily for him he decided to take his motor-bike to work that day and he is still with us but many who used wait beside him on the platform are no longer. We are all thinking of them and those left with their lives in pieces. We must swear by the very spirit of life that we will work to bring to an end days like last Thursday in Madrid.

In peace,
Fiachra Ó'Luain

Features and Opinion

Women's Week Review "Putting Women in the Picture"



Well the week was a great success, of course I am bias but I hope that everyone enjoyed it! The week was kick started by International Women's Day. We had numerous events for the day including the National Women's Council's exhibition in the Foundation Building which highlighted the lack of women in managerial positions on all the major boards in Ireland ranging from the Bank of Ireland to the Houses of the Oireachtas. Wonder what UL's representation of women in managerial positions is!

Eileen Trauth gave a talk on "Women and Ireland's Knowledge Economy: Snapshots Of Change". It proved to be a very interesting talk that sparked a lot of question from the audience. The talk was followed by some amazing contemporary dances by Mary Nuan, Anne Burke and Jean Butler. That was not all though, Mary Coll and Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill gave a presentation on their work and experiences, which was followed by Salsa Dancing were Mr Dave Corely was ordered to put down the camera and shake his "not so child baring" hips!

In the Stables Courtyard The Pink Fair brought the artistic genius and talent of local artists to UL students, a rare encounter and hopefully not the last. Thanks to Caroline from the Irish Peace Society for organising it and all the artists and stall holders. The day was finished with the movie Lilya 4-Ever, a

very moving film for all who saw it and a Battle of the Sexes Table Quiz in the Sports Bar. You had the males and females of different departments in the college battle it out to raise money for Limerick Rape Crisis Centre and Adapt House. Thanks to Madeline for organising it and Sarah and Bernadette for helping run it.

Now to Tuesday, which in my eyes was the highlight of the week. The day began with some much needed Meditation (well in my case my sanity was depending on it!). Josie led the guided workshops and we all reaped the rewards. The fabulous Amanda Coogan, who you all saw on the front of our leaflet, gave a lecture on her work. I have never seen anything like it in Ireland before. She is a very successful performance artist and she breaks all the social norms with her work. The next day she received a very honoured award for her work, the Irish equivalent of the Turner Prize. We wish her the best of luck in the future and remember you saw her here first!

The Limerick Rape Crisis Centre gave a short talk and showed a film that they had produced. I would like to thank Miriam from LRCC for coming out and working with us and all who attended.

Then the event that we had all been waiting for finally came. The Vagina Monologues came to UL!!!!!! UL didn't know what was

happening with all these newly liberated men and women, screaming CUNT!!!! Yes you heard me, CUNT!!! The boys and all. The Jonathan Swift was rocked by stories of passion, abuse, self-exploration and liberation! Whether you hated it or loved it, it definitely makes an impression on you. Just want to thank Stacy and all the LSAD women and men for putting it on for us. Not forgetting Paul and Mike from UCH and Dave Corely for sorting the stage for us.

And the night continued into the Stables with Women's Week and Seachtain na Gaelige merging for an explosive night. Daithí O Sé was our maestro for the Drag Queen Karaoke, ok the Drags never showed up but Daithí, Eoin O Suilleabhain, our ULSU president and many more got dolled up and were the queens of the night. Thanks Lads.

A special thanks to Brendan, Declan and Aidin from the Stables for putting us up and letting us take over the karaoke for the night and not forgetting the fabulous Caroline Walters who did a great job on Seachtain Na Gaelige. Daithí's UL fan club would like to give Caroline a special thank you for getting Daithí within a mile of the campus. Even after such a great day it wasn't over. Wednesday saw some great speaker-led discussion on Rape as a Weapon of War and Female Genital Mutilation. The East Room in Plassey House was full and there was great participation from the floor. Just want to thank the Peace and Development class for giving the presentations and organising the event.

As if Tuesday night wasn't enough. The Scholars was taken over for Ladies Night on Wednesday evening. The music ranged from the exceptional traditional sound of Devana, to the unique sound of our very own Eoin O Suilleabhain and then to the soul dancing vocals of Second Nature, all the way from Great old Dublin! The night was a success and the buckets were filling up fairly lively! I would like to thank Ann Caulfield from Adapt House for coming out and giving a short speech.

Thanks also to Joe, Mick and Ger from the

Scholars for the night and their very generous donation. We really appreciate it and are glad to see the Scholars being used as an alternative venue for Clubs And Society's events. Lets hope there is many more to come.

For Thursday's events I would like to specially thank Fiona Tracy from the Cervical Screening Programme, Debra from the Kickboxing club for agreeing to run the self-defence classes and The Aikido Club for providing us with mats.

So it was a success!!!! People were talking about important issues relating to women. The Jonathan Swift was filled with men, women, staff and students listening to stories about women and their bodies, notably their vaginas, and lets have more of it!!!!!!!

We had the Irish Peace Society along with other clubs and societies, the Students Union, the Arts Office, Aonad na Gaelige, UL HR Department, Dep of Life long Learning, UL Women's Studies and Office of the VPA & R all come together to run a great week and raise some valuable money for the Limerick Rape Crisis Centre and Adapt House in Limerick.

The week wouldn't have been possible without the help of the exceptional Patricia Moriarty and I want to give her a very special thank you and the members of the Irish Peace Society. But in my eyes the week highlighted two great heroines, Ann Caulfield and Miriam Duffy. Ann Caulfield works with Adapt House in Rosbrien, they provide vital shelter and counselling for women and children who suffer all types of domestic abuse. Miriam works with Limerick Rape Crisis Centre, they also provide counselling and support services, but to the victims of rape and their families. These two women are on the front line of a battle that all should pray they never have to enter and this should be acknowledged. So my hat is off to these two women and everyone else who helped organise Women's Week. Thank you!

The Fresh Prince of U.L.

When we think of the Ottoman Empire, we think of the power and glory of an empire that stretched from Europe right the way across the middle-east. A dynasty of great rulers and of palaces filled with eastern splendour. How times have changed. Kerem Oten is an International student in U.L. studying an M.A. in European Integration. He is also fourth in line to the Ottoman throne. It's everyday we have royalty in U.L. The Ottomans, or Osmanoglu, to give them their proper name are sons of Osman, a direct descendent of Mohammed, with the empire originating in 1299.

In 1453, Constantinople became the capital of the empire under the jurisdiction of Mehmed II and was so for the next 650 years. The Ottmans through a succession of great leaders, like Sultan Slaem and Sultan Bayezid, became great conquerors and became leaders of the Muslim world. The beginning of the end was from the 16th century onwards with a continued decline from the 18th century onwards.

"We were more of a conservative society than Europe of the time", Kerem recalls, "we only received the printing press 300 years after Europe."

We then discussed the "harem"! "The harem was constant among all sultans.

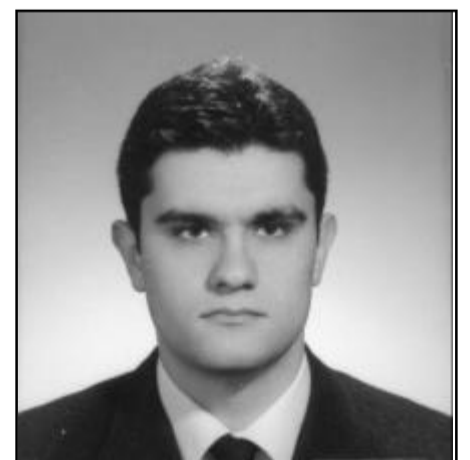
One was allowed to marry four times but, many sultans kept up to 400 women in many of their palaces! One particular Sultan had over 500 sons but, only those of extraction from the four royal wives could be considered heirs, so he killed the majority of the rest!" This we might consider barbaric but this was a different time with different customs. "The sultan was the supreme ruler with many nationalities living under him within the empire. Christians, Jews, they were all treated equally. The Christians paid more tax than the others as an exemption not to be in the Sultan's army", he said.

Kerem continued by saying that the demise of the empire became apparent at the time of the Balkan War and World War I. "We as a ruling family had been fighting for almost 100 years and during that period we had let the old ways slip and the standards of education, military skill and industry had fallen by the wayside. It all gave way to the pleasures of life! In saying that though, the Ottoman empire at the time achieved what the EU is trying to achieve within Europe today - unity and diversity under the one flag", he remarked.

When Attaturk came to power, the last Ottoman ruler, Vahideddin, was exiled from his country with no worldly

possessions and died in San Remo, where he didn't even have the money left over for his burial. In 1981, the family was allowed to return to Turkey but had to change their surname and had international passports of no nationality. "We had no title, no inheritance, no claim to anything that was still rightfully ours. Both the Turkish and International courts ruled against us. I could only now go to my family's palaces as a tourist. This was very upsetting for me", commented Kerem.

The Ottomans still keep their traditions and ceremonies today. The present Sultan resides in New York City. There are 300 men now left in the royal family and Kerem has his royal ring on his hand to prove his Ottoman seal and heritage. It was the only pure blood line to survive for over 700 years. He says, "We played our role on the international scene. If the world is a play, we played our part and maybe one day the director will call us back for a performance. There has been a totally wrong reputation bestowed upon the Ottoman dynasty as barbarians. The army never killed women and children and only fought when necessary." He is proud of his Turkish nationality and believes that there is room within his country for a royal family, in a



figurehead position like other European countries. It would serve the nation well he believes.

"Middle -eastern countries still show members of the family respect and many in that region believe that the political scene only got worse, when the Ottomans left. We ruled over Jerusalem for 400 years and there was no conflict. The Ottomans protected the Muslim nations. The Europeans bestowed this image of barbarianism upon us as they couldn't beat us, so they tarnished our image instead!", he said.

So girls there you have it. Whoever said Prince Charming does not walk the corridors of U.L.?!

Drama View

Theatre Preview: Belltable Hosts Four Major Productions in April

April promises to be an exciting month for Limerick theatre and music enthusiasts, when the Belltable will play host to five successful Irish and International productions.

SWALLOW

THURS 1ST AND FRIDAY 2ND APRIL



The international Gare St. Lazare Players will present a new production of SWALLOW. Irish Theatre Magazine observed "the language is searing, raw and sometimes viciously funny" and The Irish Times noted: "for once the Irish monologue is a warranted form".

Writing for The Sunday Independent, Emer O'Kelly said "the visualisation, in this case, is little short of miraculous". SWALLOW premiered at the ESB Dublin Fringe Festival 2003 where Michael Harding won the award for Best Actor and the show was a Best Production nominee.

RASHOMON

FRIDAY 16TH & SATURDAY 17TH



The much talked about Storytellers Theatre Company bring a dynamic stage version of the 1950's Japanese cult movie RASHOMON, prizewinner at the 1951 Venice Film Festival. The play, a co-production with Cork Opera House, concentrates on the lives of three integral characters, a noble Samurai who is slain, his wife, who is raped, and a bandit who is arrested and claims responsibility for the crimes. Intriguingly his admission of guilt is disputed by both the Samurai and

his wife. However unfamiliar and exotic the setting, the questioning of the nature of truth, will however, have strong resonance with an audience whose daily staple is the story of tribunals and the frustration of their outcomes!! See it at Belltable on Friday 16th & Saturday 17th.

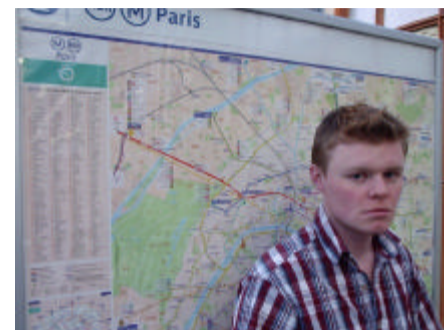
TODD!

THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET
22ND- 24TH APRIL



From Thursday 22nd to Saturday 24th of April, Kabosh Theatre Company from Northern Ireland will present 'TODD! The Demon Barber of Fleet Street'. A physical, comic and thrilling tale of blood and lust set in a Victorian Theatre in 18th century London, TODD! is a musical tale of a barber with more than a passing interest in the "cut-throat shave" and "short back and sides". Five actor/musicians take to the stage

Further information on the shows is available from the Belltable box office on 061-319866 or visit www.belltable.ie

TADHG STRAY WANDERED IN
28-30TH APRIL

The Belltable will then round off an incredible month of theatre when Fishamble Theatre Company bring star of Neil Jordan's The Butcher Boy Eamonn Owens to perform in a new Irish show by Michael Collins. The story follows the adventures of Tadhg who leaves Navan after his Leaving Certificate exams in pursuit of a girl who has fled to Paris. It is about an impetuous young man who becomes increasingly disillusioned with the world as he wanders around the streets of Paris in search of love. Owens has also acted in The General, Amongst Women, Bachelor's Walk and more, "TADGH STRAY WANDERED IN" is his stage debut and comes to Limerick from Wednesday 28th to Friday 30th April.

Little Shop of Horrors Review

LIT Millenium Theatre

"Go on the Plant" - So the call went up from a bunch of slightly inebriated lads in the back row at one of the showings of the play. Sums it up quiet well methinks. The production by the U.L. Drama Society of "Little Shop of Horrors" at LIT recently was definitely the most entertaining musical I have seen in a long time - more entertaining in fact than some major productions I have witnessed. The professionalism of the show and the talent of the cast are to be commended. From the outset, the stage itself set the scene for an electrical performance that was imbibed throughout with a sense of theatrical gusto. When the interlude came, you cried out for more rather than take a break from the enthralling pace of merriment and show-stopping tunes that were being performed on stage. On the other hand, the audience probably needed the break to catch their breath having been carried along by the fast-paced ebb and flow of this production. The scenery, costumes and make-up were all impressive and a real sense of proficiency and effort was on show from the society at all times. It would be hard to single out anyone in particular but notable mentions must go to Eoin Salley in his role as Seymour, Philip Ardiffe in his role as the dentist - a character that was a quasi semblance of Elvis and Jack Nicholson and Jean Wallace as Audrey - with a voice that would amaze and a talent that knows no bounds. The rest of cast performed their parts with great

expertise and all showed true dramatic qualities.

Speaking to Dave Corley after the show he said that he "would like to thank all the cast and crew for all their effort". Lisa, the director and Adrian the stage manager were also mentioned in favourable terms by him. He went on to say that from the outset "we knew it would be a tough ask to get this show up and running and we told everyone who auditioned that they could kick it or lick it!"

He continued by saying, "The production had loads of teething problems, that even the character of the dentist couldn't fix but even with all the expense and effort - blood, sweat and tears - it was worth it all in the end. We had last minute problems with the plant and I would like to thank Tony Wallace for all his help in that matter. We have a very talented cast, if not incestuous - in that some people found true romance within the cast! We managed to accomplish what we set out to do and for that we should be proud. The look on Paul Lee's face after he came out after watching it said it all to me. I knew then we had made a success of it."

He remarked that the society are already thinking about a production for next year and are ready to put in five months of work, seven nights a week, for four and a half hours a night. So if you are thinking of becoming involved - then be prepared!

Blithe Spirit Review

Belltable Arts Centre March 6th

From the moment the curtain rose on a perfectly formed and dressed set there was no doubt that this production by the Torch Players would prove to be a high point in the company's illustrious history. As the evening progressed these hopes rose and by the end were confirmed.

What makes the difference between an adequate and an excellent evening of theatre?

First of all, of course, the play itself. Blithe Spirit is perhaps one of Coward's best-observed pieces of writing. As with all great farces it lets the audience into secrets of which some of the characters are sublimely unaware. Yet no one is ridiculed - our sympathies are universally distributed, retaining interest throughout the whole proceedings. And the plot, though of course outrageous, becomes credible because of our liking for those involved.

Then the direction by Maurice O Sullivan ensured that the pace of this long play was lively. Not a one in the

audience was bored and even the teens who in this day are more used to short action filled programmes were thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Finally the acting, here The Torch Players lived up to their considerable reputation with a lively and accomplished cast.

With Paul Mc Carthy playing the hapless "Charles", Brid Hartnett as "Ruth", Sharon Coffey, as Elvira and Eleanor Bennett as Mrs Bradman. Robert Hutchinson was the epitome of an English Doctor but it was Mary Jones who gave a very energetic performance as Edith and Mary Harvey who sparkled as Madame Arcati who lifted the the play from the mundane to the sublime for me. We in Limerick expect nothing but the best from our Theatre groups and as usual The Torch Players step up to the plate and deliver. A very enjoyable night at the Belltable, which left me looking forward to the next production from this Theatre Group.

An Focal is always looking for writers, reviews, photographers, proof-readers, sub-editors, cartoonists, idea-people, smartarses and commentators.
If you'd like to be part of the team, email sucommunication@ul.ie

Pop View

Pop Goes the Century:
Icons of Pop Culture from the 20th Century



Sid Vicious

replaced by the man who would become the most infamous and most tragic of the Pistols. The attitude, the image, the accessories...Sid Vicious was the epitome of punk and was quickly placed on an iconic pedestal by his adoring fans. From such heights however, it was easy to topple over the edge and when he fell, he paid the ultimate price.

John Simon Ritchie was born in London on 10 May 1957. After living a lonely and nomadic childhood, he befriended John Lydon during his teenage years. It was Lydon (later Johnny Rotten) who first bestowed the name Sid Vicious on his new friend, in honour of a particularly nasty hamster of his. The irony of the situation is that to all his peers Sid was gentle, polite, shy and anything but vicious; but when the Sex Pistols hit the big-time it became a name and a reputation to live up to.

When Lydon first joined the Pistols, Sid became their biggest fan and a constant

and outstanding figure at their gigs. At first his presence was subtle - he created the pogo dance and was always supremely dressed in punk attire thanks to his association with Sex, the shop owned by the Pistols manager, Malcolm McLaren. Before long though he embraced the idea of anarchy and developed a taste for disorder. He frequently started fights (and lost them!) to liven up the Pistols gigs and on another occasion attacked NME journalist Nick Kent with a bicycle chain.

His life changed forever though when Matlock left the group. His unwavering devotion and his connections to Johnny Rotten made him the obvious replacement despite his complete musical ineptness. Sid was fiery, unpredictable and had a dangerous reputation that fitted in well in a group that had already been banned from playing many gigs throughout England. Not long after his inclusion, the Sex Pistols again outraged the nation when they released their provocative first single "God Save The Queen" just in time for the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations. Despite being promptly banned across the airways, the song reached the top of the charts but was omitted in what remains to be the only week in its history that there was no number one single in the British charts.

More importantly in Sid's life, he had fallen in love with an American groupie called Nancy Spungen who allegedly came to England to sleep with a sex pistol. Nancy however was a junkie and before long, Sid too succumbed to the lure of heroin. Often too jacked up to notice what was happening around him, Sid's use to the group began to dwindle. Alarmed by what was happening to their band-mate, Johnny Rotten, Steve Jones and Paul Cook tried to separate Sid from Nancy and the heroin she had introduced into his life; but in every way, Sid was hooked.

Riding high on the success of the singles "Pretty Vacant" and "Holidays in the Sun", the Pistols embarked on an ill-fated American tour. With the US knowing only his media image, Sid did all he could to live up to his 'Vicious' persona but by the end of the tour he was virtually functionless within the band, contributing to Rotten's eventual walk out and the end of the Sex Pistols.

Sid returned to London, recruited Nancy as his manager and attempted a solo career - the only enduring moment of which was his rendition of Frank Sinatra's "My Way". Pretty soon though the offers began to dry up and by the end of August, the couple had settled in Room 100 of New York's Chelsea Hotel. On 12 October 1978, Sid awoke from a drug-induced sleep to find Nancy lying dead in a pool of blood under the bathroom sink, his hunting knife protruding from the single stab wound to her abdomen. Though he claimed to have no memory of the previous night, Sid was arrested for murder. Bail was paid by Malcolm McLaren and the day before he was due to go on trial, Sid was released



into the care of his mother, Anne Beverly. Once they reached an apartment in Greenwich Village they called a dealer who arrived claiming his heroin was unusually pure. Sid took a hit and passed out. When he came to, his mother suggested an early night in preparation for court the next day but when she was asleep Sid searched for the rest of the heroin and took the lot. The next day, 2 February 1979, he was found dead. He was 21.

Sid Vicious will never be remembered for his contribution to music. Instead his legacy remains because he personified the attitude of a generation who were eager to break free of the shackles of convention. Sid was anger, he was danger, he was disrespect, he was desire, he was excess, he was apathy, he was frustration, and he was anarchy. But he was also a paradox - behind closed doors Sid Vicious disappeared and in his place was John Ritchie, the sweet, amiable young man who loved his girlfriend and could not live without her. Dying young only secured his status as an icon. The myth of Sid Vicious is a fascinating one and the tale of his short, turbulent life continues to endear, entice and captivate each coming generation.



In 1976, the Sex Pistols erupted into the public consciousness with all the subtlety of a brick crashing through a window when, during an appearance on Thames TV's Today show, they shocked an early evening audience with a string of expletives that secured instant notoriety. They were immediately welcomed by a generation of disillusioned youth as they snarled abuse at the traditional order and stuck two fingers firmly up at the establishment. When bassist Glen Matlock left the band in 1977 he was

Quit Smoking
Information Session

Tuesday 23rd March

Plassey House 1.00-2.30 or
Plassey House 6.00-7.30
Wood Room



If you want to attend this event please contact
Elaine Kiely Student Affairs Office
call 061-213143 or
Dave Garrahy Students Union Welfare Officer
call 061-202519.

Movie View

ALONG CAME POLLY



An insurance risk assessor on the rebound falls for an avowed risk taker in the romantic comedy *Along Came Polly*.

STORY

Along Came Polly has a place in a tiny niche of the romantic comedy genre that one might call "Poopy Love." You know these movies; they feature a nerdy guy, usually played by Ben Stiller, whose love interest witnesses him in the throes of some scatological or penile trauma yet falls in love with him anyway. The girl is usually a childhood friend (à la *There's Something About Mary*) who's grown up to be a beautiful, if quirky, creature, she'd have to be, to fall in love with a guy who gets his manhood caught in his zipper on prom night, discusses milking the cat at her parents' dinner table (à la *Meet the Parents*) or, as in the case of *Along Came Polly*, contracts a massive case of diarrhea on their first date after eating spicy food with his fingers. But it's all in the spirit of fun as the love interest teaches the uptight guy to

embrace life, and there's much hilarity on the road to romance, as well as a fairly irrelevant subplot whose sole purpose is to show us what a great guy the hero is.

ACTING

As Polly's leading man, uptight, newly wedded insurance risk assessor Reuben Feffer, Stiller proves he's still the undisputed king of rom-com films by hamming it up to the hilt, whether he's showing off his newly acquired salsa skills or making his misery and anger palpable, and physical, when his bride Lisa (Debra Messing) has a fling on the first day of their honeymoon in St. Barts with French scuba instructor Claude (Hank Azaria). Crestfallen and bitter, Reuben returns to the Big Apple alone and, while at an art show with his best friend, former child actor Sandy Lyle (Philip Seymour Hoffman), bumps into an old school chum, the free-spirited Polly Prince (Jennifer Aniston). The uproar begins in earnest with Hoffman on the scene, his egomaniacal former child star is a funny tub of pomposity and insecurity, and he and Stiller have nice comic chemistry together. That's more than can be said of Aniston, who doesn't seem to want to get her hands dirty, even though the script offers her the opportunity. She never really participates physically in the comedy the way Cameron Diaz did in *Mary*, she simply reacts to Stiller's antics. Her character's pet ferret gets more laughs.

DIRECTION

Like Stiller, *Along Came Polly*'s director and screenwriter John Hamburg is no stranger to rom-com, having written the outrageous script for *Meet the Parents* and the less clever, though highly original, *Zoolander*. The jokes in *Polly* seem limited in comparison, with a high reliance on fart

jokes, and, of course, the old took-a-dump-in-your-girlfriend's-bathroom-and-the-toilet-won't-flush gag. That doesn't mean the movie's not funny--it is. There's just not much here we haven't seen before.

BOTTOM LINE

The crap-joke laden *Along Came Polly* is an amusing diversion, but it's the same old s***.

3 stars

STARSKY & HUTCH

Turn up the '70s soundtrack, break out the polyester shirts and hop into the white-striped red Ford Gran Torino: It's *Starsky & Hutch*, a big-screen treatment of the '70s TV cop show, low on plot but high on retro



comedy.

STORY

Welcome to Bay City (San Francisco) circa 1975, where the action's hot and the afro sportin', platform shoes wearin', disco lovin' natives are even hotter. One such denizen is David Starsky (Ben Stiller), a by-the-book homicide detective whose motto is "When you cross the line, your nuts are mine!" He's got a lot to prove, his

mom was a legend in the force, killed in the line of duty, and his fierce determination to bring in the bad guys drives away all potential partners. He's paired up with Ken "Hutch" Hutchinson (Owen Wilson), a laid-back detective who "looks out for Numero Uno" and has a tough time upholding the law because of his propensity for breaking it. On their first day as partners, the boys find a dead body floating in the bay. With the help of Hutch's super-fly "urban informant" Huggy Bear (Snoop Dogg), who tells them "I dish it out so you can play it out," they follow a trail that leads to businessman/suspected drug dealer Reese Feldman (Vince Vaughn). The unlikely duo have to look past their differences and pool all their street smarts, undercover skills and good looks to get to the bottom of this one.

ACTING

Sometimes casting is everything. Without the manic and hilarious Stiller, the breezy and unaffected Wilson, the ultra-cool hip-hopper Snoop Dogg and the wry and flippant Vaughn, *Starsky & Hutch* would quickly fall apart since it lacks anything resembling a compelling plot. Stiller and Wilson re-create that groovy chemistry they had in *Zoolander*; they read each other intuitively, after all this is their sixth collaboration. But more important, for those fans who want to wax nostalgic, the actors also bear an uncanny resemblance to the original *Starsky & Hutch*, Paul Michael Glaser and David Soul (who make a strategic cameo). Same goes for Snoop Dogg as Huggy Bear, although he has a slightly menacing attitude than the original Huggy, Antonio Fargas. Vaughn makes a delicious bad guy, spouting offhand non-sequiturs in the midst of the mayhem he



Sunday 28th

Faggy's on the move, don't miss his American wake with Dj Tim in the Main Bar

Monday 29th

"Gin Devils" Live in the main bar (winners of the 1st Battle of the bands)
House of Fawls in the main bar and function room

Tuesday 30th

Pre school party with pop Quizzes and Prizes
The Funk Junkies Live Acoustic Session in the main bar 6-8
Dj Conor Walsh in the main bar and function room

Wednesday 31st

Pit your Hero skills in the Scholars Deathmatch (Mud pit)
The Funk Junkies Live Acoustic Session in the main bar 6-8

Jazzmag presents:

Electric Beats@the Scholars Club, UL
Cian Frawley & Did

plus Live Percussion from Ronan Forde and Friends!!

Dont miss Diss

In association with Footworks and Dolans

Also live in the main bar "The Waxies"

Thursday 1st

Rappers and Slappers at the Scholars
The Funk Junkies Live Acoustic Session in the main bar 6-8
Escapade make their return to the scholars
Dj Fawls in the main bar and function room

Friday 2nd

Beach Party

Wind the Week Down with Open Decks in the Function Room
Pre dolans gig with Mr. C.

Incognito Live in the Main Bar

COYOTE UGLY



Dancers Wanted

Think you got what it takes to be a COYOTE?

Scholars Club, Thursday Weeks 2,4,6 & 10

Top 3 go through each week with a top prize of

€250 for the Final

Prizes of €100, €50 & €25 to be won each week

Ask at the bar for details

Movie View

creates. Case in point, after shooting a delinquent minion on his yacht, he sits down in the sun and asks his mistress if he's "tanning weird." But Will Ferrell's brief appearance as a prison inmate with a penchant for dragons and belly buttons nearly steals the show.

DIRECTION

Director Todd Phillips has a knack for the genre: Old School combined a convincing, albeit simplistic, story with bellyaching hysterics, and Phillips employs many of the same devices and an equally talented cast to pull off similarly hilarious moments in Starsky & Hutch. Unfortunately, the director is working with limited and rehased material. The original TV show, which ran from 1975 to 1979, was all about the adorable Starsky, the easy-on-the-eye Hutch, the car, and that's about it. No NYPD Blue or CSI type drama there. While Phillips hits all the S & H high points, he isn't able to flesh out much more than the show did, and considering how vapid it was to begin with, you wish he'd added something a little more to the original.

BOTTOM LINE

Starsky & Hutch will remind you just how bad '70s cop shows could be, but its stellar comic cast will keep you laughing in spite of it.

4 stars

THE MISSING

A Western drenched with mystery, action, suspense and the supernatural, The Missing is a blend of almost every conceivable Hollywood genre. The result is a gripping and haunting tale featuring one of the most chilling and bloodcurdling movie villains of all time.

STORY



The world of Maggie Gilkeson (Cate Blanchett), a young medicine woman raising her two daughters in an isolated area of New Mexico in the 1880s, gets turned upside down when her child is kidnapped and her estranged father, Samuel Jones (Tommy Lee Jones), comes back into her life. After leaving his family years ago to live with an Apache woman and her people, Samuel has reassessed his life and now wants to make amends with Maggie, who wants nothing to do with the father who abandoned his family decades earlier. But when Maggie's oldest daughter, Lilly (Evan Rachel Wood), is stolen by a brutal band of desperados, she realizes that her father is the only person able and willing to risk his own life to help save the girl. As Samuel, Maggie and her youngest daughter Dot (Jenna Boyd) set off across the American Southwest to find Lilly, they inevitably grow closer. But while Dot is excited to know her Apache grandfather,

Maggie has difficulty reconciling her feelings of resentment with her newfound respect for him. Lilly, meanwhile, tries to devise her own means of escape from the clutches of Pesh-Chidin (Eric Schweig), the cold-blooded Indian mystic leader of the murderous band and undoubtedly one of the most terrifying movie villains ever.

ACTING

The powerful performances in The Missing turn this already suspenseful story into a truly intense film. Leading the way is Blanchett as Maggie, an intelligent and incredibly tough woman who swallows an intensely bitter grudge against her estranged father in order to save her daughter. Blanchett is able to convey her character's emotions without ever having to say a single word: In the scene in which Maggie sees her father for the first time, Blanchett's facial expression and body language suggest a bad history before it's even laid out. Jones' portrayal of Samuel, on the other hand, is the opposite. His face is always stern and he looks unsympathetic, but he still shows that behind this icy exterior is a warm and truthful individual. But one of the most surprising performances in the film comes from Boyd in the role of Dot, a young girl with a rather old soul. Boyd portrays her character as a bright and clever little girl without oozing cuteness or being too much of a smart-aleck. And although Schweig doesn't get too much screen time as the evil brujo (witch) Pesh-Chidin, the actor, with his spine-chilling stares and wicked snarl, is by far the scariest villain to hit the big screen in a long while.

DIRECTION

Director Ron Howard's The Missing, a suspense thriller wrapped in a Western, has a very good story, a character-driven script devoid of the macho elements that often plague Western pics. Although Howard does fall prey to some stereotypical native Indian hocus-pocus, it's refreshing that the leading women in the film are not all victimized by men but are strong, independent individuals. But the film's dramatic elements are offset with the introduction of the slimy Pesh-Chidin, a pockmarked Apache who tortures and kills people using spells and mystical powers. Howard helps makes this nasty character even scarier by shrouding him in mystery, only showing quick glimpses of him and not fully explaining his powers and their origins.

BOTTOM LINE

Ron Howard's The Missing is an intense and well made Western that evenly blends mystery, action, suspense and the supernatural to buck the clichés normally associated with that genre.

4 stars

HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG

An adaptation of the best-selling novel by



Andre Dubus III.

STORY

Set in Northern California, the film portrays the bitter and ugly fight for ownership of a house overlooking the

Pacific. A recovering addict whose husband left her months ago, Kathy Nicolo (Jennifer Connelly) has lived in the house since childhood. Early one morning, she's awakened by a county official nailing an eviction notice to her front door for nonpayment of a business tax. Despite her protests, the official instructs sympathetic police officer Lester Burdon (Ron Eldard) to help Kathy pack her things and vacate the premises. Friendless and broke, she takes a room in a local hotel to ponder her legal options. Meanwhile, the county wastes no time in putting her house up for sale at a public auction. A former colonel under the Shah of Iran, Massoud Amir Behrani (Kingsley), buys the house with an eye towards fixing it up and selling it for a hefty profit. What he doesn't count on is Kathy's refusal to go without a fight-or the fact that Lester will risk everything to help her.

ACTING

Although Connelly (A Beautiful Mind) gets top billing in House of Sand and Fog, Kingsley has the far meatier role. There's a tragic grandeur to Behrani, who's a deeply moral man torn between chasing the American dream and doing the right thing. An Oscar winner for Gandhi, the stage-trained actor brilliantly conveys his character's journey from triumph to despair. In this film, Kingsley gives a performance on a par with his work in Gandhi, Bugsy, Schindler's List, and Sexy Beast.

DIRECTION

A music video and commercial director making his first feature film, Vadim

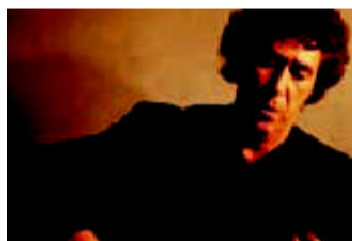
Perelman shows real promise of becoming a top-notch filmmaker. His passion for the material is clearly evident onscreen. He also displays a genuine flair for working with the actors, who give committed, heartfelt performances; Iranian actress Shohreh Aghdashloo (Maryam) is especially good as Kingsley's distraught wife. In fact, House of Sand and Fog is most compelling when it focuses on the Behrani family. A Russian émigré, Perelman sensitively captures the Behrani's sense of dislocation in their adopted country. We get a strong sense of their history and the emotional baggage they carry from living in exile. Unfortunately, the director is less skillful in his depiction of Connelly and Eldard's characters, who are rather sketchily rendered. This is no reflection on the actors; both give strong performances in underwritten roles. It's just that their actions, particularly those taken by Eldard's character, often seem insufficiently motivated.

BOTTOM LINE

Graced with a superlative performance by Ben Kingsley, this intense, at times powerfully affecting drama is undermined by director/screenwriter Vadim Perelman's rather heavy-handed approach to the downbeat material. For all its flaws, however, House of Sand and Fog is a quietly devastating film.

4 stars

ULartsoffice



A MasterClass with Flamenco Guitarist Juan Martín
Monday 29th March 7pm
Admission FREE

A legendary virtuoso of the flamenco guitar, Juan Martín has established himself through his live performing, as one of the world's leading exponents of flamenco. Juan Martín has performed all over the world at some of the leading concert venues and at major International Arts and Music Festivals. The London Times describe him simply as "Dr. Flamenco".

As a prelude to his concert in UCH the following evening Juan will present a Masterclass in Flamenco Guitar on Monday March 29 and will guide a number of performers through its stylistic components. This is a rare opportunity to hear a performer of this calibre in such intimate surroundings. Seats are limited so please come early or contact patricia.moriarty@ul.ie to reserve places.

Spring Film Season
 Jean Monnet Theatre
 Mondays, 6:30pm



Monday April 5th
Nine Queens
 dir fabien belinsky
 argentina / 2001 / 115 mins

Virtually none of the characters are quite what they seem in the clever and devious Nine Queens, which drops clues as liberally as red herrings over the course of a hectic day in the lives of a couple of confidence tricksters in Buenos Aires. They meet in a convenience store where the older of the two men, Marcos (Richardo Darin) spots young Juan (Gaston Pauls) overplaying his hand as he pulls a scam at the check-out. In need of a new partner, Marcos invites Juan to team up with him, and the two men get to know each other by showing off their individual expertise at conning the innocent. The film's title refers to a sheet of nine rare postage stamps from the Weimar Republic, which offers both men an irresistible shot at the bit time. A huge hit in Argentina, Nine Queens marks a belated but thoroughly confident feature film debut as director for Fabian Bielinsky, after decades as an assistant on commercials and features. The cast, in particular the two leading actors, are appropriately deadpan in a film where we are just beginning to figure who should be trusted when Bielinsky throws in another curve-ball that makes you think again. This pleausrably teasing movie demands – and repays – the alert attention of its audience.

Kollege Weak Preview



Kollege Weak 2004 is finally swinging around, it'll hit you in week 7. Here's all the info you're gonna need for the week.

DayTime Mayhem

From midday every day, the Stables Courtyard is the place to be as MC/Funnyman Bernard O'Shea takes ya through the day.

There's gunge tanks, boat racing, slippery pole, spacehopper racing, boiled egg competitions, half yard of wine, yard of coke sponsored shaving, mud pit, etc etc etc.

Chances are someone will lose the run of themselves and become a legend in their own lunchtime (and probably until next year) by doing everything they are told and never quite living it down. You never know, it might even be you!

A Cautionary Tale

Kollege Weak is a time to kick back and hang loose, but don't go too overboard. Mind your drink and your buddies and don't wander home on your own!

Oh, and..

Other people's windows, cars, bins, hedges etc are not yours to play with, and we've already heard the Fields of Athenry, we don't want to hear it again!

Bungee Jump:

The Bungee Jump action is happening in the East Gate Car Park all day Wednesday. If you're in the mood to get real high, then try these seven simple steps to heaven (and back)

Step 1 Get the form from Students' Union Reception.

(you'll need a valid UL ID Card)

Step 2 Get everyone you possibly can to sponsor you a euro. If you don't know 100 people, get everyone to sponsor you twice.

Step 3 Bring Back your completed form to the Students' Union Reception by 12pm on Tuesday 30th of March.

Step 4 Have serious misgivings all day and all night Tuesday.

Step 5 Turn up to the East Gate Car Park on Wednesday.

Step 6 Don't Chicken Out!

Step 7 Experience the best buzz of the week!

STUDENTS Top Up in store & WIN one of 10 camera phones



Text **WIN** followed by your Top-Up receipt serial number to **51500** & answer a simple question to be in with a chance to win! (texts cost standard rate)

OR

Write mobile No. on back of receipt & place in entry box provided

ENTER AS MANY TIMES AS YOU TOP UP

DRAW WILL TAKE PLACE THROUGHOUT COLLEGE WEEK



STUDENTS ONLY - Winners will need to provide valid Student No. Offer ends the 02/04/04
Terms and Conditions apply. Texts cost standard rate (incVAT)
Operator charges may vary. SP Púca 218 6831

Kollege Weak Preview

DayTime Extras

Tuesday:

make sure you're up the front to see hypnotist zak powers, who kicks off at 1pm. he'll have you looking for leprechauns three weeks later.

Wednesday:

you can't have kollege weak without bouncy stuff, and today's the day for that, with gladiator jousting, sumo wrestling and three-legged fairy-liquid tangle twister on the menu for starters. bungee action also on the cards

Thursday:

the first official UL sports day. we will weed out the cream of ul's 3-legged racers, egg and spoon racers, sack racers, wheelbarrow racers, skippers and tug-of-war-ers, to name but a few. having run the heats, we move on that night to the finals in the market at the sports day ball where the contenders will race and the champs will be crowned.

Night-time

Tuesday

le back to school party

the old favourite. make it short and tight, and that includes the boys!

the market €8

Wednesday

superheroes

dress up and save some denzels/damsels in distress, from wonderwoman to the green goblin, you pick em!

trinity rooms €8

Thursday

2 options to choose from and it's all good!

pimps and hoes

featuring **ugly duckling** (LA hip-hop legends) filth, filth and a little more filth

trinity rooms €10

ul sports day

come watch the finals of the day events live in the market, all in the tightest little primary school sports gear you can get your college ass into! it's the perfect environment for sports!

the market €8



The Stables Club

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

www.stablesclub.com



YOUR WEEK 6 ENTERTAINMENT

- Mon** Music Society
'Open Mic'
- Tues** Karaoke Night
Fleece First Prize and a shot at the Grand Final with a € 300 Prize!
- Wed** BAND: Transmitters
- Thu** Noel McLoughlin
- Fri** Overseas & Postgrad Societies Surprise Party Night
DJ 'til late
- Wend** Open Sat & Sun Pool Table, food & matches

WEEK 7 - KOLLEGE WEEK

- Mon** Daytime events in Stables Club courtyard
2 DJs will play in The Stables Club from 7pm
- Tues** Daytime events in Stables Club courtyard
2 DJs will play in The Stables Club from 7pm
- Wed** Daytime events in Stables Club courtyard
BAND: Free Beer
- Thu** Daytime events in Stables Club courtyard
BAND: Lollygaggers
- Fri** End of Week party at The Stables Club
- Wend** Open Sat & Sun Pool Table, food & matches

New Smoking Policy

The Stables Club will be a no smoking area from March 29th, in line with the new ban on smoking in the workplace. We would ask that our members respect this ban, and its enforcement. Members who wish to smoke can still avail of club facilities in the outdoor covered courtyard.

Weekly Afternoon & Evening Specials

New at The Stables Club!

We are now offering a range of afternoon and evening specials here at The Stables Club. Drop in to try a snack from our delicious range!

- Homecooked Panini** €3.95
with salad & chips
- Chicken Twisters** €4.30
- Saute Potatoes** €1.70
- Chicken Wings** €3.50
with salad & blue cheese dip
- Spring Rolls** €3.50
with sweet & sour sauce
- Spicy Potato Wedges** €3.50
with choice of two dips & cheese
- Nachos & Cheese** €4
with jalapeno peppers, breadroll & can
- Chilli Potato Skins** €3.50
with salad (2 per portion)
- Pizza Slice** €4
with chips & glass of milk

The Stables Club is a members only club. All visitors must be signed in.

The Stables Club, Stables Courtyard, University of Limerick

t: 061 330139 f: 061 330176 e: info@stablesclub.com

Clubs and Societies

ULAC Rout Challengers At Varsity Championships

The Guinness Book of Records state that the coldest inhabited place on the planet is the small town of Oymyakan, Siberia. We can only assume that the distinguished gentlemen of the Guinness Corporation have never been to the indoor stadium at Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. It was that cold that even the fine men of UL Athletics club weren't exactly strutting about in their Lycra. If you catch my drift... However the conditions did not inhibit ULAC from regaining their Men, Women and Overall titles.

In the Men's competition the sprinters continued their good reign of form with Darragh Graham earning a hard fought victory in the 200 metres as well as snatching silver in the 60 metres. Following closely behind in the same race was Dermot Smith, formally "Big Derm" Smith, propelling his new streamlined figure to a bronze. Smith, fiercely unlucky with the breakdown in the times equipment, surely would have smashed his long standing Personal Best in the race. In the 400 metres there was more drama as the fall of Tobin (DCU) scattered the athletes behind. Paddy O'Gorman (CIT), who was ahead of the debacle, went on to win the race by the width of a vest from a heroic comeback by our own Maurice Donohue, only in

his freshman year, in 51:36. The men's 4x200metre relay enjoyed the fruit of the individual men's talent, with the addition of Colm Lynch and Erasmus student extraordinaire Louis Louis, as they romped home to victory by 3 seconds from UCD.

The jumps saw the sparring of the brothers Burke, Tomàs winning silver on count-back in the high jump with a good season opener of 1.85m (6ft 2), Kevin on the same height earning bronze, the triple jump saw Tomàs snatch bronze with his last jump, a personal best 12.73m. In the high jump, Kevin Grant on 1.80m was disappointed not to do better after his phenomenal season open the week before of 1.89m (6ft 3) but went on to smash his best in the pole vault and achieve an excellent multi-events tally. The other two ULAC athletes entered in the Multi-Events (Pentathlon) had a titanic tussle for the gold medal with both men smashing the previous Irish Indoor Varsity record. While the seasoned multi-eventer Kevin Burke came out on top, it was the dark horse Brendan Doyle (and he knows a lot about horses with the sovereign rings, leather jacket and Wa'erford accent bai) who raised most eyebrows with huge performances in a myriad of events. The endurance events also threw up

some fine performances with an in-form Thomas Scanlon smashing his best in the 3000 metres with a time of 8min 50sec, with Patrick Muldoon following behind in 9min 10sec earning the UL men third and fourth. Mirroring this result was John Egan in the excruciatingly difficult 2000 metre walk. Those hardy souls who inflict this event on themselves, solely for points, win our "taking one for the team" unofficial award with no unofficial prize but sore hips. Final Result. Top Three:

UL Men: 98 pts UCD Men: 80 pts
Trinity Men: 36pts

The women's team outdid their male counterparts with an even more emphatic victory by almost double points, from their closest rival Trinity College Dublin, lagging some 43 pts behind. Orna Donohue led by example by collecting a host of medals on her way to multi-event victory. Included in her laurels were a gold, two silvers and two bronze medals. In the long jump Amanda Creighton took bronze to add to her 4th place in the triple. Sarah Mc Cormack also turned out fine performances with a silver in the pole vault as well as bronze in the shot-put.

Back in the sprints Maria Sheehan maintained her form throughout to snatch gold in the 400metres from Alex

Flamme of UCD. This, on top of her World U23 High Jump Record that she set later on in the day highlighted the Ennis women's diverse athletic prowess (Dramatisation: may not have happened). There was drama in the 4x200metre relay with a dropped baton, however the remaining runners all raised their game to qualify dramatically for the final where the ULAC quartet won silver.

The middle distance races proved to be hugely successful for the UL ladies with Michelle Harvey winning gold in the 800 metres as well as leaving enough in the tank to take silver in the 1500metres later on in the day. Following exactly a second behind was her compatriot Siobhan O'Doherty, earning a well deserved bronze. Siobhan O'Doherty went on to score silver in the 3000 metres with Fiona Reid hanging in for a third place finish and 4 valuable points. In another endurance event, the 1500 metre walk, Naoibh Larkin grabbed fourth. Overall result:

UL: 206 UCD: 113 TCD: 101

So that's it folks, the days are getting longer, the air is getting warmer and the University of Limerick track has become an altogether more hospitable place. We welcome all new comers so feel free to join us trackside at 6pm weekdays.

Soccer Club Report

UL Soccer came heartbreakingly close to a first Men's senior intervarsity championship when they lost out on penalties at the semi-final stage to the University of Ulster, Coleraine. The "Collingwood" tournament was held in ideal conditions at the Queen's University Belfast sports grounds last week.

The tournament had started really brightly for the UL lads. On **Day 1** we were down to play University of Ulster, Magee. This was a tricky game in that Magee as losing league finalists had shown some form already this year and Collingwoods are all about getting a good result on Day 1 to set you up for the week. UL were well tuned in from the start and took an early lead when Anton Mannering finished the ball to the net after a great inswinging corner from Brian O'Reilly. UUM were back on level terms shortly before the break due to a silly mixup at the back. Manager Paddy Gunnigle laid it on the line in no uncertain terms during half time and UL wasted no time in forging a 3-1 lead. Pat Finucane scored the first from inside the penalty area after being played through by Stephen Enright. The second goal came from a set play and was (yes Anton) converted by Conor Molan. To their credit UUM fought back and brought the score back to 3-2. Brian O'Reilly made the game secure when doing well to get in front of the keeper at the near post he converted a good low cross from the byline by Donal Barron.

Day 2 saw UL play RCSI in what supposedly was an easy game on paper. Nothing could have been further from the truth however as the Surgeons battled really well right from the kickoff. In fact UL went 1 down from an RCSI corner that went in at the far post despite us having a defender there. Again the manager had to work his magic at halftime, and to be fair the UL lads raised their game appreciably in the second half. We thought that it was

going to be one of those days as UL proceeded to hit crossbars, posts in fact anything other than the back of the net. Just after changing to 3-5-2 up popped wing back Conor Molan racing onto an inside right throughball to lift the ball over the onrushing Surgeons keeper. This new formation bore further fruit when Mark Holland, playing just behind the front two, beat the RCSI offside trap to coolly lift another throughball over the keeper. This was enough to win the game for a tremendously relieved UL.

Day 3 saw UL take on Trinity, a side that also competes in the Eircom U21 league, in a game that was effectively a cup quarter final. After only drawing with UUM, Trinity had to win the game whereas a draw would suffice for UL. This game saw UL put in one of the best performances that I can remember over the last number of years. Restricting TCD to just one shot on target during the whole game UL dominated from start to finish. Conor Molan opened the scoring 5 minutes into the second half with a great near post glancing header from a Stephen Murphy corner. The second goal came from a Conor Molan penalty after Anton Mannering had been hauled down on the goal line by the TCD keeper. This was a funny decision as it denied Anton Mannering a great goal, as he had still managed to finish the ball to the net despite being caught in a TCD headlock! He was not pleased to see Conor rob him of "his" goal.

Day 4 of this marathon event saw UL play University of Ulster, Coleraine. As the only team to maintain a 100% record in the round-robin stage of the competition UL were confident going into the game. This seemed justified as the lads got well on top early on. Anton Mannering got the opener with a lovely turn and finish from outside the box. We sat back on the sideline and waited for the insurance goal to come. It

The group tables looked like the following at the end of the round robin phase

Group 1	P	W	L	D	Pts	GD
Team						
UU, Coleraine	3	2	0	1	7	
UU, Jordanstown	3	2	0	5	4	
St. Marys	3	1	1	1	4	
NUI, Maynooth	3	0	3	0	0	
Group 2						
Queens	2	1	0	1	4	+6
UCD	2	1	0	1	4	+4
DCU	2	0	2	0	0	
Group 3						
UL	3	3	0	0	9	
TCD	3	1	1	1	4	
UU, Magee	3	1	1	1	4	
RCSI	3	0	3	0	0	
Group 4						
UCC	3	2	0	1	7	+16
DIT	3	2	0	1	7	+7
NUI, Galway	3	1	2	0	3	
St. Pats	3	0	3	0	0	

never did through a combination of tigerish Coleraine tackling and over elaboration on behalf of the UL lads. All of a sudden midway through the second half UL were in a dogfight as Coleraine grabbed an equaliser from a corner, again conceded at the far post. Try as they might UL just couldn't get the winner, the fatigue of a fourth game in as many days meaning that people just couldn't get on the end of crosses or convert half chances. Extra time came and went without further scoring. As always seems to be the case the team that was happy to get the game to penalties was victorious in the shoot out. UL missed twice once in sudden death as the referee, who was out of his depth for most of the game, allowed the Coleraine keeper to move off his line throughout the shootout. This result was a particularly bitter blow for all those involved in UL soccer. Coleraine would endure heartbreak of their own the following day when, exhausted,

they lost the final 1-0 to an 85th minute UCC goal. This makes it three Collingwoods in a row for UCC, a fine achievement by any standards.

At the end of the tournament UL were awarded two places on the Irish Universities side, Conor Molan (Grad Dip, Computing) and Ben Spicer (2nd Business). In addition UL was awarded two places on the Freshman international side to play their Northern Irish counterparts in Dublin next month. Congratulations to Sean Allen (1st Law and Accounting) and Stephen Murphy (1st Business). We expect these youngsters to be at the heart of our team when UL hosts the Collingwood next year. Perhaps next year we can finally convert our league success into a championship breakthrough.

The soccer club's trip north was made financially possible through the generous support of the Castletroy Park Hotel.

What's On?

Limerick City Events 23/03 - 04/04

WEDNESDAY 24TH MARCH

Dolan's - DOT COMedy Club
(new room)with James Goldbury - MC Bernard O Shea
UCH - Tosca by Puccini

WEDNESDAY 24TH MARCH

UCH - Turandot by Puccini

THURSDAY 25TH MARCH

Dolan's - Juliet Turner
A Welcome return to Limerick for Juliet, promoting her new album "Season of the Hurricane"

FRIDAY 26TH MARCH

Dolan's - Sean Keane
Dolan's - Bell x1
Highstool - Coldsnoon Conspiracy,
Large Mound, TeN PaSt SeVeN
UCH - Cork City Ballet present
Ballet Spectacular 2004

SATURDAY 27TH MARCH

Dolan's (new room) - Charles Webster *Now into his second decade as a true innovator in the electronic music scene, Charles Webster is one of the few real mould-breakers in an increasingly stale & predictable dance music world*

Dolan's - Rubyhorse *Boston-based band from Cork, their CD 'Rise' was produced by Jay Joyce in Nashville. early booking advisable*

HighStool - The Roolettes & 90 Day Men

UCH - Glenn Miller Orchestra

LIT Millenium Theatre -

Tráth Na Gcos - *A Festival of Traditional and World Dance*

SUNDAY 28TH MARCH

Dolan's - DJ Tony Vegas

Some hip hop DJ's get so fast and slick in their scratching, cutting and general creating that the turntable becomes an instrument all on its own. The DJs who do this are called turntablists, their art is called turntablism. Tony Vegas is Founder member and one half of the Scratch Perverts, one of the UK's most successful turntablist crews info here

MONDAY 29TH MARCH

High Stool - Black Eyed Snakes, windings + Special Guest

TUESDAY 30TH MARCH

UCH - Juan Martín Arte Flamenco Puro *Dr Flamenco himself.*

WEDNESDAY 31ST MARCH

THURSDAY 1ST APRIL

Dolan's (upstairs) - DOT COMedy Club *John Cowley with John Colleary - MC Bernard O Shea*

Dolan's - Footwork Club:

featuring Fish Go Deeps Shane Johnson and Greg Dowling

Belltable - Swallow

FRIDAY 2ND APRIL

Dolan's - MR C *dj, innovative producer, founder of plink plonk , Shamen frontman and co- owner of the end,*

Belltable - Swallow

SATURDAY 3RD APRIL

Dolan's - The Dunne Family *Official launch of their CD 'Legacy'*

Dolan's (upstairs) - Johnathan Richman *one of rock's most eccentric and unpredictable cult figures- rock to country to Latin stylings and back*

BoatClub, Sarsfield Bridge -

Tiger saw Goodtime John

More info available at www.dolans.ie, www.belltable.ie, www.uch.ie, www.theamc.net, www.thehighstool.com

Where's Ben? China!



The Terracotta Warriors

Ben's still in the Far East this week! Since no photography is allowed with the lifesize warriors, Ben decided on a photo among the gift shop statues instead!

Nersh

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Clubs and Societies

Kayak Intervarsities



It was the weekend we had all been waiting for...The Kayak Intervarsities 2004! The polo team left for Cork at 11.00am on Friday morning and in usual ULKC style they ran a bit late. Our first and only match was against Trinity who were favourite to win. Daire got lost on the way to Cork so it up to Jenny to save the day! It was a very tough match and UL played brilliantly and skilfully right until the very end. Unfortunately we got beaten by one point and were consequently knocked out of the tournament. But we didn't feel so bad because Trinity won the whole polo event and that meant we lost to the eventual winners! When the rest of the team arrived that evening the hostel was full of UL and DCU paddlers. We hit the pub and then the nightclub where some crazy interclub antics involving a ULKC and a Galway paddler were performed on the dancefloor!!

The team for the whitewater race were dragged out of their cosy beds at the unearthly hour of 7am the next morning. The lack of rain resulted in a very low water level so that all the competitors had to scrape their way down the river. Jimmy, Don, John Power, Seona and Loraine all competed and had 2 runs apiece of which their best run was counted. The competitors all had to make slalom gates, an eddy and a 360° roll among other things. Loraine got badly pinned at the start, but apart from that had a brilliant run. There were some

other major pinnings however and rescuers were kept busy lifting many of the stranded boats off rocks. Seona swam on her first run, after a lot of convincing did a second run - and got on very well this time round - while Jimmy, John and Don all had 3 brilliant runs apiece.

The long distance race was the next event to take place. While we were waiting for this event to kick off, some entertainment was provided by Decky who was out practising and took an unexpected swim! Justin did very well in the men's glass category beating Emmett himself while Homer, Paddy, Felix and Paul all competed in the men's plastic category. But Homer decided the long distance race just wasn't long enough for him and paddled right past the finishing point!! Seona and Jenny competed in the women's glass category and I competed (after a lot of persuasion from Homer) along with Loraine, Debbie, Ruth and Alexa in the plastic category. Loraine sacrificed her place by kindly helping a swimmer at the beginning of the race. Well done to Don and John who came 2nd in the Canadian Canoe race.

The hostel was crazy on Saturday night while everyone got ready for the cartoon character party. Just about every Simpson's character was represented so that it was like Springfield with yellow-faced kayakers everywhere. Other characters on show included Popeye, The Powerpuff Girls, Bananas in Pyjamas and Scooby Doo to name but a few. Paddy did not only look like Scooby Doo but also sounded scarily similar to him as well! Meanwhile Richie looked well turned-out as Popeye's girlfriend Olive Oyl. By 10.00pm the party was well under way and during the course of the night we all had to vote for someone from our club to go up on stage for a 'You're a Star' style competition. Don



was voted to perform on stage, but due however to his unexpected disappearance Homer had to replace him at the last moment. Homer's hidden talents were soon discovered - he may not be able to dance.... but he sure can belly-dance!! After the great night we walked all the way back to the hostel - still dressed in our pyjamas!

On Sunday, the rodeo, which took place in 'The Hole of Death' in Leefields, finished off a brilliant weekend of paddling and partying. Kieran and Homer's synchronised paddling skills impressed everyone when they went out in the duo boat! Jimmy, Ross and Mike Jones all entered the event and Ross won second place while Jenny and Sarah competed in the women's event. Congratulations also to Sarah who won first prize in this event.

From here we went straight to the awards ceremony, where the majority of the Irish paddling community were squashed into one room. The results of each event were called out and then as everyone waited in anticipation, the overall winners were announced.....UL!! There was absolute silence for about 5 seconds - even we were silent we were in so much shock!! Then we decided we'd had

enough of this silence and jumped up off our seats and started screaming. However it turned out that we were right to be so shocked. A mistake had been made in the calculations and DCU were the real winners.

Before we left Cork on Sunday evening we held our A.G.M and a new committee was elected. Congratulations to John Power on his becoming 'Captain Power'. A big THANK YOU to Don and all of last year's committee for all their work and dedication over the past year.

Surprisingly enough we all scrubbed up pretty well for the Club's and Soc's ball! Well done to Don who was presented with two awards - the Best Club Person of the Year and The Jason Hackett Memorial Award. The second award was presented to Don for his unfailing commitment and all the work he has done, not just for the Kayak Club, but also for all the other clubs and societies. Without a doubt, Don deserves both these prestigious awards for his incredible devotion to clubs and societies.

By Aideen Byrne

Sub Aqua Club trip to Kilkee



Last weekend saw a number of the university's scuba divers head for the West Clare waters of Kilkee. Waking up on Saturday morning, with the sun shining and not a cloud in the sky, you really could have been convinced it was the summer already. That was until you jumped into the Atlantic Ocean - 8°C!!! But ULSAC divers were not going to be put off by a bit of cold water and went exploring Newfee Reef in what was to be the first of many dives that day.

Newfee is the most sheltered of the Kilkee dive sites and is usually accessible in all but the worst conditions. This made it ideal for a training dive to start off the day. A number of different training exercises were practiced, whilst taking in the amazing life that surrounded us. After Newfee we

headed to the dive centre to see if we could get a few boat dives done over the weekend. They verified our thoughts that we were definitely insane to be diving in February but were still happy to take their boat to the water for the first time this season. First stop - Chimney Bay. This is a cliff face with a reef - at 20m below sea level - which is home to a great variety of marine life including dogfish.

After the boat dive, and the showers which followed it, we wasted no time in planning the next dive. It was back to Newfee to see what it had to offer at night. Leaving Dave back at the house to try his hand at cooking - which I must admit he did a great job of - the rest of us headed back out to get one more dive in before we called it a day. I went first with Pepijn to do some more training while the others waited until night had completely set in before hitting the water. Even at dusk the sea was really coming to life, with more life than I had ever seen in Newfee and as it got really dark the reef became abundant with life - from shoals of fish to crabs and starfish - all of which showed an amazing display of colour.

After a hectic day on Saturday we took things easy on Sunday and planned another boat dive for the afternoon. This time we headed to Myles Creek. Myles Creek is a

North-facing inlet on the top of the Duggerna Rocks and is a large reef covered by tides at the mouth of Kilkee Bay. Not having enough experience I decided not to



dive this site but I nonetheless got a great view of everything from the boat that dropped the others into a gully. There were spectacular colours on the floors, the walls were covered with anemones and the whole area populated with a variety of fish. The perfect end to a great weekend's diving. Training continues in the diving pit every Thursday, 5-7.30pm.

UL Trampoline Club



SOUTH WESTERN REGIONAL COMPETITION

The South Western Regional trampoline competition was held on the 28th of February in Ignition trampoline club, based in Raheen. Three bouncers from UL competed to qualify for the nationals. Sophie Ivan Clancy competed in the intermediate category against stiff competition. She fared well, placing first with a high qualifying score. Alannah Turner and Sinead Maloney competed in the novice category. It resulted in Alannah placing first and Sinead, third, both with high qualifying scores. All three competitors will travel to Dublin on the 12th of March to compete in the nationals. Best of luck to our members in Dublin!

Alannah Turner

Clubs and Societies

UL Socialist Party News

The Socialist party has been very busy here in UL in the last few weeks and we don't plan on stopping yet. For the next few weeks there is a lot of activity planned.

It is now coming up to a year's anniversary since the invasion of Iraq, by US and UK forces. To mark the occasion, anti-occupation protests are being held in most capital cities around the world and the society is organising to get as many people as possible along to the demo in Dublin on March 20th. If you're interested in sending a clear anti-war message to Bertie and the rest of the world's leaders, then I urge you to come along. The more people there, the stronger the message!!

We have just finished a series of fund raising events: a successful table quiz and a very exciting poker tournament. On behalf of the society I would like to thank everybody who came along and participated in both events and because the poker night was such a success we promise to do it again before the end of the semester.

Contact the Socialist Party at ulsp@skynet.ie

UL Windsurfing and Surfing Club



The last few weeks have been really exciting for the UL Windsurfing and Surfing Club. We recently purchased a 20 ft container for storage of all our new windsurfing equipment in Killaloe. In addition, our beginner course got under way last weekend with great success and we would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all new members to the club. This weekend sees a number of intermediates undertaking a powerboat course in ULAC, again underlining the club's commitment to training in order to establish good safety procedures on the water. Also the second stage of the beginner's course is taking place. A big thank you again to Elaine and Muscles for their time and effort, which is much appreciated. For more upcoming events check out our fantastic website: <http://www.skynet.ie/~winds>. Meanwhile here is a report on the beginner's course by our newest recruit, Jamie Hayes!

Beginner's Report by lakeside correspondent Jamie Hayes:

Braving the Cold for the Wind

Saturday 6th March saw the start of a new windsurfing beginners' course, which I'm glad to say I am part of. We

had a foggy start to the day but once we reached the ULAC (by about 9.45) the fog was beginning to lift, letting in the

paddle around on the board without the sail. This gave us a feel for the board and how to get the footing right before



welcome sunshine. Once we got the group assembled we were divided up into two groups of 6 and the fun began. I was in the first group and was therefore first to get into the not so warm water of Lough Derg (thank god for wetsuits!), while the other group learned the complicated procedure of rigging up the sails.

The course was well organised and no sooner were we toggled out than we were introduced to the one and only 'Muscles'. He is the resident expert on windsurfing training and he gave a quick introduction to windsurfing and what he hoped to achieve on the day. Then it was straight out onto the water for our first

adding the sail to the equation. Within a few minutes everybody was managing to stand on the board without falling in. I suppose the cold water was the best incentive of all not to fall in.

On graduating from this we all grabbed a sail each and then we were good to go. Muscles gave us the basics of how to get started and then we were off. Everybody got going and before we knew it we were windsurfing. I was surprised at how easy it was. After just an hours teaching we were learning how to turn and even sailing against the wind. I'd recommend it to anybody who likes the water with a bit of excitement thrown in. To be continued...

Club Liathroid Láimhe, Ollscoil Luimnigh

A few weeks ago, members of UL



Handball Club ventured off up to the big smoke that is Dublin to take part in the All-Ireland 40x20 Interschool Handball Championships. These championships took place in the handball courts that were located in Croke Park, DCU, UCD, Trinity and St. Brigid's (Blanchardstown). With over 160 players taking part, it was guaranteed to be the largest Interschools ever and although the club did not take home any titles, our players can be proud of their achievements.

Sharon Daly progressed to the final of the Ladies Open Singles but was unfortunate to come up against long time rival and sister Maria Daly of UCC! In the Mens B Singles Donnacha Maguire reached the quarter finals along with Stephen Cass and John Veale. Angela Lyons lost out in the Ladies Singles to eventual champion Maria Daly.

Our greatest success came in the Team Championships where we kicked UCC's ass. We annihilated this sorry excuse for a team in the quarter finals on a scoreline of 97-22. However we succumbed to the eventual champions, SIT in the Semis.

SIT went on to beat QUB by a single point in an exciting, interesting and nail-biting final.

In the Mens Open Eoin Kennedy of DCU claimed his fourth title in as many years with a win over Dessie Keegan of DIT. As I write this article, news is filtering in from across the Atlantic that there have been many successes for Irish Players at the World Collegiate Handball Championships that are currently being held at Springville, Missouri. DIT have become the first Non-US team to win the Men's Team Event while SIT's Noel McHugh and Joe McCann have taken the Men's Open Doubles. This is a first for Irish Collegiate Handball and UL Handball Club would like to congratulate all involved.

On an administrative note, Donanacha Maguire has been elected as Leas-Cathaoirleach, Comhairle Ard-Oideachas Liathroid Láimhe (That's Vice-Chairman, Third-Level Handball Council for all Non-Gaeilge speaking people). Added to this UL have been selected to host the All-Ireland 60x30 Interschool Championships in October of this year. This is a massive undertaking for a club of our size and we would urge anyone interested in helping our club to contact any of our committee: For further info, email killshot_dunny@hotmail.com

"Keep the ball rolling, or else!"

UL Environmental Society

Envirosoc have been mad busy this semester. Ye probably saw one or the other of the two stalls we held in weeks 2 and 3. The first one we held was to recruit new members and boy did we recruit new members!! Over 100 new members signed up to join envirosoc and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome these new members into the society and hope they get as much out of it as we do. The second stall we held was in conjunction with fairtrade fortnight and we gave out free samples of fairtrade tea, coffee and chocolate. As a direct result of our fairtrade campaign we have succeeded in getting fairtrade products into the SU shop so next time you're in doing your shopping why not try some fairtrade products, not only are you guaranteed of very high quality but also that labourers and farmers are in the third world are getting a fair price for their produce.

At the end of week 3 envirosoc packed their bags and headed to Cork for a grassroots gathering. We took part in various workshops including one on proposed incinerators around the country, plans were also made for protests for Mayday. A great time was had by all (especially Denise and Delia who got to know members of other environmental societies very well INDEED!!!)

In week 4, we held the first critical mass of the semester and although the turn out wasn't as big as it could have been, we still cycled in around the city centre a couple of times letting drivers know cyclists have as much right to be on the road as they do and also promoting cycling as a healthier, more environmentally friendly means of transport. Our next critical mass will be in week 7, so anyone with a bike who's willing to join us watch out for posters.

Envirosoc held their annual river clean-up last week and it was a huge success, 25 schoolchildren from Milford national school came over with their enthusiastic teacher, the children claimed it was more fun than their school trip! Over 12 sacks of rubbish was collected, half of which was recyclable and dropped to the nearest recycling centre. Our next clean-up is on Tuesday 23rd March in Elm park, so why not join us! watch out for posters. On Saturday 3rd of April, a group from Envirosoc will attend an organic farming workshop in Dromcollegher, so we'll let you know how that goes. Anyone interested in joining us, we meet every Monday night at 7pm in the SU, looking forward to seeing some new faces. Tabhair aire don timpeallacht!

Clubs and Societies

UL Young Fine Gael



I wish I could say that the last three weeks had been as busy for UL Young Fine Gael as the fortnight that preceded them, but I feel I can honestly say that we won't have two weeks as busy as those until we're all members of a Fine Gael single-party Government (with me as Taoiseach). The main events were our contribution to Seachtain na Gaeilge, held on Wednesday of Week 4, which was a debate on whether or not the Irish language should be included as an official language of the European Union. Seosamh MacMuiris of Ionad na Gaeilge here in UL and Rickard Deasy were the guest speakers, and both made interesting and valid points. Rickard opposed the view that Irish should be it should be included as he felt that we, the Irish, should be giving the language a shot in the arm ourselves, and not looking to the EU to do so. The meeting was well attended and all those who showed up definitely left with more knowledge than they came in with. The following night was the 2004 Clubs & Societies Ball, held in the South Court Hotel. In all, twelve dapper members

made the trek into darkest Raheen, where we were shortlisted for Best Society, up against the Irish Peace Society and the Society of Seáns' cousin, Vinnie Paul. We realise that it was a great achievement just to be nominated and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the SVP on winning Best Society Event, Best Society Person and Best Society, as well as Bernadette Sexton of the Irish Peace Society, who was presented with the Mike Sadlier Award, and all we can do is endeavour to ensure we finally make it third time lucky and win Best Society next year. After the lovely meal (big shout out to the South Court!) and awards ceremony, some of our number simply got drunk, others spoke to complete strangers on the interesting topic of Russian history, and some let easy chances of scoring slip. You all know who you are. Pictures of the night, including one of some of us with comic Des Bishop, can be accessed on our website, <http://finegael.csn.ul.ie>, where currently the online survey revolves around what the nickname of our Chairman, the delectable (or unelectable) Barry Walsh, should be. At the time of going to press, 'Chairman Mao' was in the lead, but only you can make a difference. It remains to be seen if the votes will outnumber the amount



cast in the last poll, which asked "Who the most gorgeous committee member was?" and was won by a certain Adonis-like PRO.

This week, Week 6, features a trip to Leinster House on Wednesday, when we will get to meet our heroes, Olwyn Enright andwho cares who else, she's the only one worth going to see. The following night, provided we're not too well lubricated from the previous day, we are holding a meeting on the subject of Women in Politics, which follows on from last year's Young People in Politics meeting. Attendees will

include Ireland West European Parliament hopeful, Madeline Taylor-Quinn, Limerick County Councillors, Mary Jackman, Maria Byrne and Mary Harty, as well as our own Fine Gael 'wimmin', YFG Vice-President Sinéad Carey, YFG National Panel member Elizabeth Munnelly and FG Executive Council candidate, Lorraine Munnelly. But sadly, no Olwyn. Denis Hurley, Minister for Information ("There are no Ógra infidels in UL, never!"), ULYFG

UL Vikings American Football Club.

Well in the past few weeks we have been working hard to try and sort out the problems that we found during the home match with the Admirals. And it was looking like it was going to pay off against the Dragons.

The match went like this:

In the first quarter the excitement started from the off and with two great passes from Ben Lanser and two great receptions from James Chandler we made a lot of yards and scored a touchdown, Vikings up by 6. Then when Paddy Ryan scored with the kick for the extra point it looked like we were going to demolish the Dragons. The Dragons didn't make any yards on their first downs and punted. The Vikings did well on their next set of downs with a notable 22YD reception by James Chandler. But no score was achieved here and the Dragons regained the ball. Then the start of the injuries came about with Justin damaging his shoulder and being rushed to hospital, things were on the way down. Consecutive 1st downs by the dragons put them to our 17Yd line. End of Quarter.

The second Quarter started well with a sack for Stack giving us the ball on the 18yd line. A few bad tackles went in with Joe Garvey getting a helmet in the back and being put out of the game he was brought to hospital too. No first downs left the Dragons with a chance, they got a 15Yd run play and then punted to our one Yd line, With us starting on the 1Yd it was going to be tough and with the dragons getting a safety from the play they got on the score sheet with 2pts. Then a few plays followed until

Mike intercepted on their 8Yd line, a pass play saw them intercept, and then Mike intercepted again on the 27Yd line and the Vikings went for a field goal. Paddy missed and the half ended.

The third quarter started and finished quickly with consecutive first downs from the Dragons leaving them on our 29Yd line and a turnover on downs gave us the ball with 3.30 left in the quarter, A punt gave the Dragons the ball with no real excitement in the quarter. The quarter ended soon after.

The fourth quarter started with the dragons scoring a touchdown near the off and missing the extra point. Dragons lead 8-7. A kick off to the Vikings with us receiving the ball on our 39Yd line. Good plays brought us up to their 30 but a fumble gave them the ball back. Dragons came on strong again and with a few missed tackles they made yards and then a sack from Liam Hayes stopped their progression. The game ended with the ball moving swiftly from one end to the other and each sides defence playing well to ensure a tight finish with the Dragons prevailing 8-7. As they say practice makes perfect and we are having a lot of practice so the results should soon go our way. If you want any information about the club or are interested in travelling to one of our games ring Diarmuid Haugh on 087-9237910 or email me at 0228087@student.ul.ie. Till next time when we have our first win of the season good luck.

G~Soc Paintballing Intervarsities

On Saturday March 13th the warlike men and woman of the games society got up too early. To catch a bus. To Tralee. To kill... or at least to shoot their opponents with balls of paint. Thats right, last Saturday GSoc entered the UCC hosted, Dynorod sponsored, Paintball Intervarsities. We'd never played together before. Some of us had never played at all. We were tired and hungry but we were ready to play. Team War Bastard were go.

Some motion sickness and some breakfast later we were at Predator Paintball, Tralee, kitted up and ready to go. As DIT pulled out at the last minute UCC and UL pooled their subs to create the DIT memorial team. It was this team that we were up against first. And we sucked. We were beaten in both our games against them despite some magnificent head weaving from John Drohan and some point blank fire from Barry Cronin. The object of the game had been, however, either to grab the flag and take it to the enemy base or to take out their team and we achieved neither. Next up was our first game against NUIG, the team who had turned up one man short and who were now carrying a UL man, John Rowe, with them. We won our first game against them and lost the second. A few games later and the league stages were over. We finished at the bottom. Going into the knockout stages we had to play the team which finished top of the league. To every ones surprise but their own, this turned out to be the DIT memorial team. They had lost only one out of six games in the league section despite never having played together.

Despite their amazing league performance their game against us, UL, was their last. We didn't get off to a good start in this game and lost the first round. Thanks to the destruction of their right flank headed by David 'Sergeant Horse' Finn, and some excellent manoeuvres from Mark O'Shea, Conor O'Byrne and Herr Jim Foley we won the second round. We went through to the finals as we had killed more of their players than they had of ours. The final against UCC didn't go quite as well and we lost both



rounds, once having almost captured the flag. UCC so, were the overall winners but we went home happy with second place.

Our hunger for covering people with paint has not been sated and we return to the fields again with members of TenForward and AeroSoc on the Monday of Kollege Week.

To hear more about upcoming paintball trips or to listen to us yammer on about past glories come to www.gsoc.net and check out our forums.

Clubs and Societies

Outdoor Pursuits Club



So many trips so little time!!

Another semester started and already 4 brilliant trips under our belt. The first was to Mt. Mangerton in Co. Kerry. With loads of new faces on the bus, enthusiasm was high. The great weather made the walk easy even for the beginners. On the top we took a few pictures in the scenery and descended. On the way down Liam and Frank decided to go for a swim in the devil's punch bowl. I had never seen that shade of blue on a person before!

we completed the horseshoe and gave everyone a taste of some 'proper' climbing. After a very enjoyable walk back down we arrived back to the bus unharmed (apart from a few burst eardrums due to some randomer's rendition of Oh Holy Night...)

It was one of the nicest days I've spent on the hills and I'm sure most of the people who also went are in agreement especially our two kayakers Debbie and Emmet!

The third trip was the Dingle weekend in Co.Kerry. They actually managed to climb a mountain as well (Mt. Brandon) and on the Sunday with a few sore heads they went swimming in the Aqua Dome. Week four's trip was to the Burren in Co.Clare where there is some of the best rock climbing and caving in Ireland. Eight people managed to squeeze themselves down Poll na gColm and out again. The rest of us went rock climbing and got 3 routes done just before the rain descended upon us! A few weeks ago five of our members headed to Galway to compete in the Orienteering Intervarsities.



UL OPC Members after another successful climb.

We couldn't have asked for more perfect weather as we left UL Sunday morning of Week2 for our trip to Carrauntoohill. There were 30 people on the bus and for many it was their first trip to Kerry. There was a gasp of delight as we came over a hill and the great Macgillycuddy's Reeks came into view. Snowfall over the previous few days had left a white blanket across the mountain range.

Our route started at the renowned 'concrete path'. Only 10-15 minutes in length but feck me is it steep! Fortunately after that it gets much better as we headed up Caher with the sun beating down. Snowballs and snow angels were a frequent sight; the higher we went, the deeper the snow became. The views were absolutely stunning even only after an hour's walk-it's a pity so few people are fortunate enough to experience it.

We crossed Caher Ridge and reached the top without a hiccup. After a quick lunch and a few photos for the ma we headed down across Ben Ceragh ridge. This descent route meant

At the end of week 6 we are proudly hosting the 2004 National Climbing Intervarsities. This promises to be a great weekend of climbing and socialising and will take place between our wall in UL and the new climbing wall in Shannon.

Saturday of week 2, two of our more experienced members Frank Cox and Liam Gahan completed the 1st Winter Ascent of the renowned route called Primrose on Carrauntoohill. This route (which took them 7 hours to complete) has eluded many experienced climbers over the past number of years and we could like to congratulate the pair on their fantastic achievement!

If anyone has any questions or queries please email opc@csn.ul.ie or check out our website at <http://www.skynet.ie/~opc/>. The climbing wall is located in the Old Sports Building and is open between 7-10PM Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evening.

3 New Black Belts for UL TaeKwon-Do



The first class for UL TaeKwon-Do this semester saw the culmination of many years of dedicated training by three of its members when the school's instructor Mr. Philip Fox presented Tim O'Sullivan and Deirdre Ni Eidhin with their 2nd degree black belt certificates and Liam Tyler with his 3rd degree black belt certificate.

The three black belts did their instructor and school proud as they were put through their paces during the demanding three hour grading. Testing for any new belt requires a great deal of preparation, this is even greater when at this level. In addition to the usual three classes weekly in UL, instructor Mr. Fox primed the three students for the grading in two extra classes each week, motivating them to train harder than ever and pushing them to the best of their abilities.

While there was a certain level of

apprehension and nervousness before the testing, this soon evaporated as the students engaged in the execution of various skills and techniques that had so diligently been perfected during the preceding months. The testing required demonstrations of punching and kicking drills, fighting techniques, patterns, one step sparring techniques and self-defence. Other aspects included rounds of kicking and punching heavy bags, free sparring and destruction (breaking timber boards). They were also examined on their knowledge of TaeKwon-Do theory. Black belts are a vital part of the school and UL now has a total of seven! UL TaeKwon-Do has greatest number of black belt and high belt grade members of all the martial arts clubs in the University, making it a great place of learning and teaching for everyone from beginner to advanced level.

UL Golf Club

The University of Limerick golf team will be in action over the next few weeks in a number of events - the Irish Golf Intervarsities being the most important. We have a strong panel still fighting for places for the event which takes place over the 25th and 26th of March. The best in collegiate golf will be taking part. We are hoping to build on a solid College Golf League campaign in which only a defeat to the considerable team from UCD at Portmarnock GC kept us from a Semi-Final spot. With final preparations nearly complete for our trip to County Carlow Golf Club, we hope we can put in a good performance and hopefully finish in the prizes - there's nothing like a bit of confidence going into a big event! The Intervarsity panel that will contest the tournament at County Carlow GC is: Niall Gleeson, Cian O'Brien, Craig Toomey, Ted Vaughan, Gary Rainsford, David Lowry, Darran Faherty, Derek Basnet, Dave Duggan, Tom Kennedy, Adrian Feane and Trevor West.

The other event that the UL golf club is looking forward to is the Inaugural

Students - Staff match which will take place at Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort before the end of March. Our team has yet to be finalised with many golfers longing to put the staff golf team in their place - for some final year students this could be their finest hour! There is no indication of what the Staff team may be but I'm sure they will have many 'bandits' on board for this match. Hopefully this will be an honourable match and we will not see any of the scenes that blighted the 1999 Ryder Cup in Brookline - as long as the Students win anyway!

Our Club Championship and Captains Prize will also be coming up in April with Doonbeg and the Old Head Golf Links the respective venues. The matchplay tournament is also receiving great interest with many people wanting to become the best matchplayer in UL. Plans are also afoot for the UL Golf Club's Big Night Out which will take place around the time of the Club Championship and Captains Prize - there actually seems to be more interest in that than in the tournaments!

As always if anyone is interested in joining the University of Limerick Golf Club you can drop us a line at ulgolfclub@eircom.net or 087-9735922. All are welcome from beginners to the next Tiger Woods and Beyond!!

Clubs and Societies

Saint Vincent de Paul



The Clubs and Societies Ball was a night that will go down in history for The St. Vincent De Paul Society here in UL. Being nominated alone for three awards was a fantastic and humbling honour, let alone winning all three - Best Society, Best Event and Best Society Person. It all was very unexpected but to win those awards really was unbelievable. It is not often that the work of The SVP is recognised so to win those awards was deeply appreciated. On the night we had nothing prepared to say so we'd like to avail of this opportunity to thank - all those on The Clubs and Soc's who voted for us, all involved in the organisation of the night and the awards, we would especially like to show our deep appreciation to all those who have supported us, especially the students of UL who have very generously donated their money but also their time and support to The Society. Without the enthusiasm we receive around campus we wouldn't be here at all.

Last week - St. Patrick's night The SVP held its annual County Colours Ball. It turned out to be a fantastic night after a lot of hard work and effort. All our tickets sold out around 12 O'clock. Everyone turned out in the colours of their county's, some people in full kits with shorts and all. We'd like to thank everyone who attended and also those who went to the effort of dressing for the occasion. Also we'd like to extend our appreciation and gratitude to the ever fantastic Ent's crew plus the staff and management of The Trinity Rooms who were all a pleasure to deal with. Also we'd like to thank anyone who

contributed to the success of the night.

Our Body Wax Fundraiser has been postponed to Week 6. Hopefully we will have a few special guests taking part in this interesting project, whilst raising a few bob for the society along the way. It promises to be worthwhile viewing so look out for us in our yellow t-shirts amidst roars of pain in The Courtyard Thursday lunch time Week 6.

Two weekends ago five SVP members: - Teresa Murphy, Niall Riordan, Maria O'Donovan, Claire Shanahan and Therese Horgan went to Kerdiffstown in Co. Kildare to attend talks on the organization of a National Young Adults Council for SVP Ireland. On Friday night a table quiz was held, as a social 'get to know each other better' event. This, surprisingly, was great crack and we had a lot of laughs. After breakfast the next morning we had a talk from John Monaghan, SVP Vice President, on the current state of SVP nationwide, the change in demand for help from The SVP in recent times and what the future holds for us on such issues as Social Policy, Child Protection Acts and Labour Laws, with an over all talk on 'Coping with the responsibility of Prosperity'. Next we had a talk from Fr. Peter McVerry, a dedicated SVP member from The North, focusing on the statement - 'Religion as divisive'. After this we broke for tea and coffee and proceeded on with a question and answer session on current issues in Irish Society - how they concern The SVP and what can we do to help. Also we had group discussions on the future of SVP and what our involvement as young adult members will be - where do we fit in. All in all it was a fantastic learning opportunity of a weekend.

If you would like to receive any information on any of our activities please feel free to contact svp_ul@hotmail.com

UL Rowing Club

Tribesmen head of the River 2004

The Annual Tribesmen head of the river took place on Saturday the 13th last.

320 crews from all across Ireland took part. Racing down Galway's river Corrib over a distance of 4500 Metres. The weather on the day was typical Galway weather Cold and blustery, which now and again clearing for the sun.

Limerick was well represented this year by Athlunkard Boat Club, Shannon R.C., Castleconnell, St. Michaels, and University of Limerick Rowing Club.

University of Limerick women's crews proved that they are the crews to beat this year by winning the Novice eights and Novice fours. Their blistering pace saw them finish over a minute faster than the other crews in the eights category.

The University of Limerick Men's Crew's performed well, taking second in

the Intermediate Eights and losing out by a narrow three seconds to NUIG.

Other University of Limerick results from the day were: Third in the Men's Open & Intermediate fours and Intermediate sculls. Fifth in the men's Open Pairs and novice eights, the Novice Eights were 0.3 of a second short of third place in a well-contested category. Sixth place was attained in the men's novice 4 when a crash at the half way mark with two eights saw their chances of the top spot ruined. Also rowing well was UL's Women's Open double scull.

Other Limerick Results saw great wins for Athlunkard Boat Club's Junior 18 Double Scull and Castleconnell's Junior 16 Women's eight.

University of Limerick are proving that they are very competitive in all boat types and grades, and have set their stall as the club to watch this year.

UL Drama Society

We here at Dramasoc have been keeping ourselves busy over the last few weeks. Little Shop of Horrors finally hit the stage at LIT for four spectacular nights in Week Three after months of blood, sweat and tears (and that was just Adrian). All the hard work paid off and the show was a huge success. Great praise must go out to all the cast and crew, namely: Eoin Salley, Jonathan Kelly, Jean Wallace, Phillip Ardiffe, Dominique Coughlan, Anna Toner, Lisa O'Brien, Ann Marie Barry, Kunal Agarwal, Laura Sheehan, David Corley, Caoimhe Kennedy (Stage Manager) and Il Duce himself - Adrian Crowe as director.

You may have heard rumours that Dramasoc won the most improved society award at the Clubs & Socs ball? Well they're true. We beat off worthy competition from Out in UL & Comp Soc. to scoop the coveted prize. We always knew we were brilliant but it's nice for it to be made official! (And no smart-arses, being most improved

society does not mean that we were crap last year) We no longer just break legs, apparently we kick ass now as well!

The year is not over by any means. Week 8 will see us threading the boards once again with 'Hot Fudge' by Caryl Churchill. That will be on in the Jonathon Swift on the Tuesday & Wednesday of that week. As well as this, Drama Soc hope to be making ourselves useful around the campus over the next few weeks, raising funds to make sure we can keep blowing ye away with our acting talent and blatant exhibitionism. So there you have it. On those dark, lonely nights don't despair but rest assured in the knowledge that there is in your midst a Drama society that will keep you entertained and ever so slightly freaked out!

"Blessed are the leg breakers for they shall inherit the most improved society award."

ESN - Getting started with a trip around Limerick

A new semester has started, which means a new season of events is on its way for the International Society. Not only the new students from all over the world who arrived for semester 2 are more than excited to explore Ireland on some enjoyable weekend trips and since it is often the nearest surroundings people care the least about, we started off on Saturday week 1 with a bus-load of around 50 people to see what there is about Limerick and around. Well equipped with a pile of leaflets about the sights on the day program, we made our way to Killaloe activity centre at Lough Derg first and did not let us disturb by the partly confusing fact that we actually left County Limerick, to cross County Clare to enter County Tipperary...or was it the other way around?! However, walking along the shore of Lough Derg woke people up, well, yes, indeed it was a bit chilly, but the water, the scenic hill view and of course the swans provided a first good possibility to shoot some photos before we headed off towards Beal Boru, the foundations of an ancient fort, where one can breathe the air of long passed times when there were still legendary high kings trying to maintain power over Ireland.

The next stop then before we went back to Limerick city was the area of Clare Glens, with its narrow, rocky and in most parts slippery paths along beautiful waterfalls being so totally different from what you normally would describe as a typically Irish landscape. But maybe for some people it was the swing on the nearby playground that caught more attraction and made Clare Glens worth a visit...? Meanwhile our empty stomachs indicated that it was lunchtime and having satisfied them with some fast food picked up at a petrol station, we finished the day with a quick rush through the historical and mainly medieval part of Limerick City Centre covering at least the main sights around King John's Castle, because this is what you HAVE TO know about Limerick, isn't it...? Well, probably it is more useful to know where to get a good coffee or where to find a decent pub, so we finally introduced people to the facilities of entertainment in Limerick before we returned to UL, keeping in mind that this Saturday was just the beginning of a series of trips which will make people experience the 'real craic'!

by Claudia Reese

UL Computer Society

This semester following the success of the last night of talks we are holding another night of informal talks on Mach 26th in An Phluais at 7:30pm all are welcome. Once again we are welcoming back past graduates and members of Skynet who are working in the Information Technology industry.

Caolán McNamara Skynet
"OpenOffice.org's Microsoft Word {Im}Export"

Is Computer Engineering; graduate of 1997. He was the first "president" of the Computer Society when it was formalized as a registered society (as opposed to "people quinnj let use his machine") of its own. He was a Skynet System Administrator for a number of years from 1994 to 2000.

Kevin Lyda

ILUG /

Doolin Technologies Ltd.

"An Implementation of the Street Performer Protocol"

A description of the Street Performer Protocol and a discussion of the technical issues in developing an implementation of it

Colm MacCárthaigh and Dave Wilson HEAnet

"Running the next Generation Internet"

HEAnet is Ireland's National Education and Research Network, providing high quality Internet Services to over 130,000 students and staff in Irish Universities, Institutes of Technology and other educational and research organisations. It provides a high-speed national network with direct connectivity for its community to other networks in Ireland, Europe, the USA and the rest of the



Club and Societies

UL Softball Club Intervarsities

Softball Club First Team Romp Through Opposition

U.L entered this leg of the tournament with high expectations after the disappointing loss to UCD in the previous round. These expectations proved justified as a new-shape team wiped all before them, conceding only twenty-five runs and comfortably out-scoring any of their opponents. Led by captain "Big John" the performances of everyone more than matched the results. This thoroughly enjoyable weekend kicked off with two nery games against our own second and third teams, which were both way too close for comfort. Thanks lads!! Day 1 was a day where UL1 never really got going until the final game against UCD. It was in this game where the relatively small crowd witnessed the play of the tournament. The UCD captain hit a monstrous drive,

which saw the ball land in the goals on the opposite side of the pitch. It was retrieved by James Chandler, bulleted to the short-stop Adam who in turn launched a pinpoint ball to catcher, Brian Hehir who was left with nothing else to do than tag the bewildered UCD hitter. John Ryan more commonly known as "Big John" was the day's most consistent hitter and with his what one could call 'different' fashion sense led the team on day1. One of the final plays of the first day saw Brian Hehir hit a grand slam against close rivals UCD.

The second day brought UL1's best overall play of the tournament. There were many fantastic individual performances. James Chandler had big hits all throughout the tournament but none more so than his gigantic strike

against UCD in the final or the grand slam against WIT2, which along with his steady catching more than earned his MVP award. The rest of the outfield were also instrumental in bringing home the cup. Adam, Gerry Guckian and Kasey showed throughout solid defence, although seemingly simple high balls were rather memorably dropped in the Trinity game. After making up the ground and actually catching the ball, Gucky unbelievably dropped it as he crashed to the floor. However all was not lost as the ever-reliable Kasey cleaned up this play. This was only shadowed by Adam's similar blunder in the same game. Closer to the pitchers plate performances were of an equally high standard as pitcher John (Panda) Leonard held both Waterford

teams scoreless with his solid pitching which was consistent throughout the tournament. More than matching the lads was Shannon Burke whose talents were even borrowed by Trinity in an effort to boost their performances. Thankfully we had her back for the final. With Stacey Gallagher continuously solid on first base leaving the opposition no room for error and Erika Jensen's bullet arm on third base always reaching its target, UL1 stormed the competition unbeaten and in all honesty relatively unchallenged.

This victory will most definitely bring excitement to the final leg at Limerick's home ground this coming April as UL1 and UCD will fight it out for the prestigious honours currently held by UL.

U.L (2) Produce Solid performance in 'Varsities

The weekend of February 28/29 witnessed our counterparts from UCD host the second-leg of the popularly growing Softball 'Varsities. For the first time, a total of seven teams took to the fields of play in search of glory: representing the capital were the hosts UCD and Trinity, two teams travelled from Waterford I.T, along with our own three impressive teams from Limerick.

After having being beaten in the final of the first leg held in Waterford last semester, there was a considerable amount of pressure on U.L (1) to produce a victory in this competition and keep their chances of retaining the trophy alive. Having won the plate last year, U.L (2) were also looking towards the victory trail, but first needed to overcome the sheer inconsistency which dogged them in Waterford.

First game of the weekend for the second team was a match-up with our 'friends' from U.L (3). Despite an excessive amount of abuse throwing on the field, this game went right down to the wire. With the majority of the U.L (3) team being American, this was more like an Ireland V America game, which caught a lot of attention when in progress. A strikeout in the bottom of the final inning by U.L (2) pitcher Anthony Kilpatrick sealed a pulsating performance by the team. Now high expectations were beginning to creep in.

Concluding lunch on the Saturday, another dominant victory over Waterford I.T (2) prevailed, and when it came to playing U.L (1) who were also undefeated on the first day so far, there was a real sense of belief in our camp. In last season's 'Varsities held here in Limerick, the U.L (1) team beat our team in the bottom of the final inning. Revenge was on the cards for this game, but despite a close game, the strength of the U.L (1) batting order shone through and defeated us. Astounding performances from outfielders Bambi and Birdie kept us within touching distance of the defending champions' right through the game.

The final game of the day saw our team come up against the Might of UCD. I have to admit that after pitching against

them for the last two years now, this team is the most intimidating of all to play against in my view, quite simply because of the way they make the pitcher do all the work and therefore make him/her more susceptible to errors. When this happens, the morale of the pitcher decreases, and with that usually the morale within the whole team slumps also. With a heavily strapped ankle, Maria managed to go the distance and into the final inning with a tremendous pitching display, and regardless of never having taken the lead in the game, big plays from shortstop Chris and Ruth on second base kept our spirits high for the second day of play.

A victory by virtue of fourteen walks on Sunday morning against Trinity saw our record go to 3-2, but then a technically astounding performance in the field by Waterford I.T (1) destroyed us, and our chances for a good quarter-final draw.

The quarter-finals saw us drawn against Trinity, who we had already played that morning and so we therefore knew what to expect, and we maybe even had a little psychological advantage over our Dublin counterparts. This game was in complete contrast to the one that took place that morning however, as only three walks were issued in a very error-free and competitive game. Once again there were great individual performances, this time from Brendan and Hatchets, but eventually our team, and our great 'Varsity run came to a conclusion when we lost by one run in the bottom of the final inning. And with that loss came the realisation that retaining the plate this year is now next to impossible.

I'd just like to thank all of the members of the U.L (2) team for producing an unforgettable weekend of softball and on behalf of the team we'd like to thank everybody involved in making the trip such a successful and enjoyable one. The final leg of this year's 'Varsities are on the weekend of April 3/4 here at the University of Limerick. We'd welcome all support so we hope to see you there!

Anthony Kilpatrick.



Bad News Bears Sighting in Ireland

During the Irish intercollegiate softball tournament at UCD a couple weeks ago, the University of Limerick fielded three teams. The first team may have won the tournament but UL 3 won the hearts and affection of the fans and players in Dublin. The team was patched together while Tony, the bus driver, guided the famed Trinity Rooms bus across the country. This squad consisted of a heavy contingent of American Study Abroad students and one lone Irishman. What this team lacked in talent they made up with enthusiasm and team spirit. The Americans, led by the incessant bantering of Jon Davenport, brought over baseball chatter that had not been seen by the likes of these shores.

The only tournament veteran Mikey Dore led the charge in the first few contests capped by a valiant pitching performance in a hard fought battle against UL 1. Nate Pratt provided an offensive spark and vocal presence from his spot atop the order. His conspirator in chatter out in the outfield Brian Maguire tracked down numerous fly balls and had a couple of key hits from the left side of the plate. Cari Ann

Hourigan and Caroline who both turned in nice defensive performances as well as a few big base hits rounded out the rest of the outfield. Melissa Bodnar also spent some time in the outfield and was probably the team's most patient hitter drawing a slew of walks throughout the tournament.

Meghan patrolled the hot corner at third and was like a rock keeping every ball sent her way in front of her. Both Dave Wagner and Jackie Price played exceptional defence at second with Dave chiming in with a few extra base hits of his own. Tim manned first as well as throwing in a solid pitching performance the first day. The team's high point came when catcher/pitcher Skip tossed a gem of a game, shutting out Waterford Institute of Technology 6-0.

UL 3 may not have won many games but lots of people felt that they definitely had the most fun and were the most cohesive unit during the tournament. They are looking forward to making a run at their fellow UL teams as well as the other college teams in the next leg of the tournament.



Letters Page

Something getting your goat? Someone rained on your parade? Something about the last issue of An Focal that you cannot let pass without comment? Trying to be funny to impress your friends? Never fear! An Focal's Letters Page is here. Vent your spleen here on whatever topic you like. Just e-mail your letters to sucommunication@ul.ie

Out in UL

Dear Madam,

I am writing to you to commend the work of Out in UL-the UL LGB Society. As a person who has just recently begun the process of coming out, I feel reassured and lucky that at this time in UL there is this supportive and outwardly active Society. I can only hope that students in a similar position feel as encouraged as I am about the active existence of Out in UL and through their work help create, as I see it, a campus which is at some level supportive of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Students.

I am not a member (yet) of Out in UL, and I am writing to let them know what the active existence of their Society means to me and I hope that it will allow students' in a similar position to have faith; knowing that if they need it that there is someone out there for help, support and fun (reference to the brilliant night that was "Queer Bash"), be it Out in UL (no matter how wired these delightful individual may seem), the SU Welfare Officer or University Counselling. At present I am the happiest I have ever been and long may it continue and it is primarily down to accepting who I am and being open with those in whom I trust.

I know this may appear to be a bit propagandist, but I feel strong about it and like a lot of things at the moment I needed to get off my chest.

Well Done to Out in UL, best of luck in the future and to those who are or thinking about coming out.

Signed:

Not quite out, but getting there!

Comment on Article

Madam,

This has a reference to the article in An Focal Edition 9, February, 2004, page 26.

I would like to draw your kind attention to the comment "A further feather in the cap of the new department is its exchange programme, which will see U.L. 's fledgling beggars sent abroad for a semester to test out their skills in the slum towns of either Calcutta or Rio de Janeiro."

I am a research student in this country for more than two years and I am from Calcutta India. I don't think terming Calcutta slum town is in any good taste for a magazine like an Focal. Nor is the statement correct. Its like terming Limerick as "Stab City". Calcutta (the proper name now is Kolkata) also houses the metro rail(which once won "The best metro rail in the world" award), some of the best educational institutions of the world like Indian Institute of Management, Indian Statistical Institute, Indian Institute of Chemical Biology just to name a few. In the sports arena Calcutta boasts of one of the best cricket stadium Eden Gardens with a capacity of one lakh twenty thousand spectators. These are just the tip of the iceberg. There are Science city, Info City and many more. The city has a rich cultural heritage and also houses some of the best architectural wonders of the world.

And every year significant number of students from Calcutta and other parts of India come to UL. Of these, those on self finance pay 3 to 4 times more fees than Irish students. This paves the way for huge revenue generation on part of UL as well. Every year UL also participates in career fairs in India to attract Indian students.

I would hope and trust that the editorial board of An Focal would be a little vigilant in future not to publish any WRONG information on any thing.

Thanking you

Sincerely

Prabir Mukhopadhyay

Editor's Note: An Focal would like to apologise for any offence caused with this article. Calcutta is indeed not a slum town, but a vibrant city (as is Rio De Janeiro).

Please be safe!

A girl who knows 'ow to use 'er 'eels

Girl, 15, Raped..... Shocked? You may have been a few years ago but nowadays these shocking incidents are happening every week in Ireland. It's not just in back alleyways either. These incidents are rampant around Limerick. Elm Park may be known to us students as "cardboard city". Even though we don't joke about it in similar fashion College Court is notoriously labelled as "Rape City".

Women in college during the sixties were fighting for equality. They protested loudly and even burnt their bra's as an act of protest. Women of today are no longer subjected to (as much, it's still there!) inequality in the workplace etc. However we are still oppressed. Fear of sexual harassment still has us chained. These chains have to be broken.

Gone are the days of nipping out to the shop for a carton of milk on your own "But we only have a few quid on us, no none is going to mug us for that" I hear you cry. Money can't buy what these b*****s are capable of taking

Why should we constantly look over our shoulder or even watch every passer-by on the street with hawk eyes in case we'll need to identify it in a mug shot down at the station. Upon questioning people about what could be done to break these chains. The general consensus seems to be "never go anywhere on your own". Common sense you'd think but practicality can take the upper hand. If your mates all live in different estates there is only so far each person can walk before they have to go their separate ways. The question of why won't some of the group stay over in one house? The truth is that some people just prefer their own bed. It's a tricky subject. It's not just teenagers and students either, its our sisters, aunts, daughters, and yes even mothers that could be attacked. Something has to be done.

Rachael Holmes

UP



THE SUPERHERO BALL

GET OUT YOUR RED Y FRONTS FOR KOLLEGE WEAK!

OOMPALOOMPA TANGO TANS

YOU JUST GOTTA LAUGH WHEN THESE GIRLS WALK PAST IN UL!

THE SMOKING BAN

A NECESSARY EVIL BUT AT LEAST THE WEATHER'S GETTIN' BETTER FOR SMOKIN OUTSIDE

ZIG AND ZAG

WE DEMAND A REVIVAL. NOW.

SUMMER PLANS

THE MORE YOU THINK ABOUT SUMMER THE CLOSER IT GETS!

GAIL FROM CORRIE

SHE LOOKS LIKE E.T. WITH HAIR!

KOLLEGE WEAK MIDTERMS

GIVING SOME OF US EXAMS DURING KOLLEGE WEAK IS PURE EVIL.

TAMPON ADDS

WE DONT NEED TO SEE THAT SHIT ON TELEVISION

WEEK 6

EHH, WHERE DID THE FIRST HALF OF THE SEMESTER GO??

E-MAIL SPAM

NO, I DON'T WANT SPANISH GUITAR LESSONS NOR DID I FIND YOUR JACKET IN THE LODGE LAST OCTOBER.

HI-5

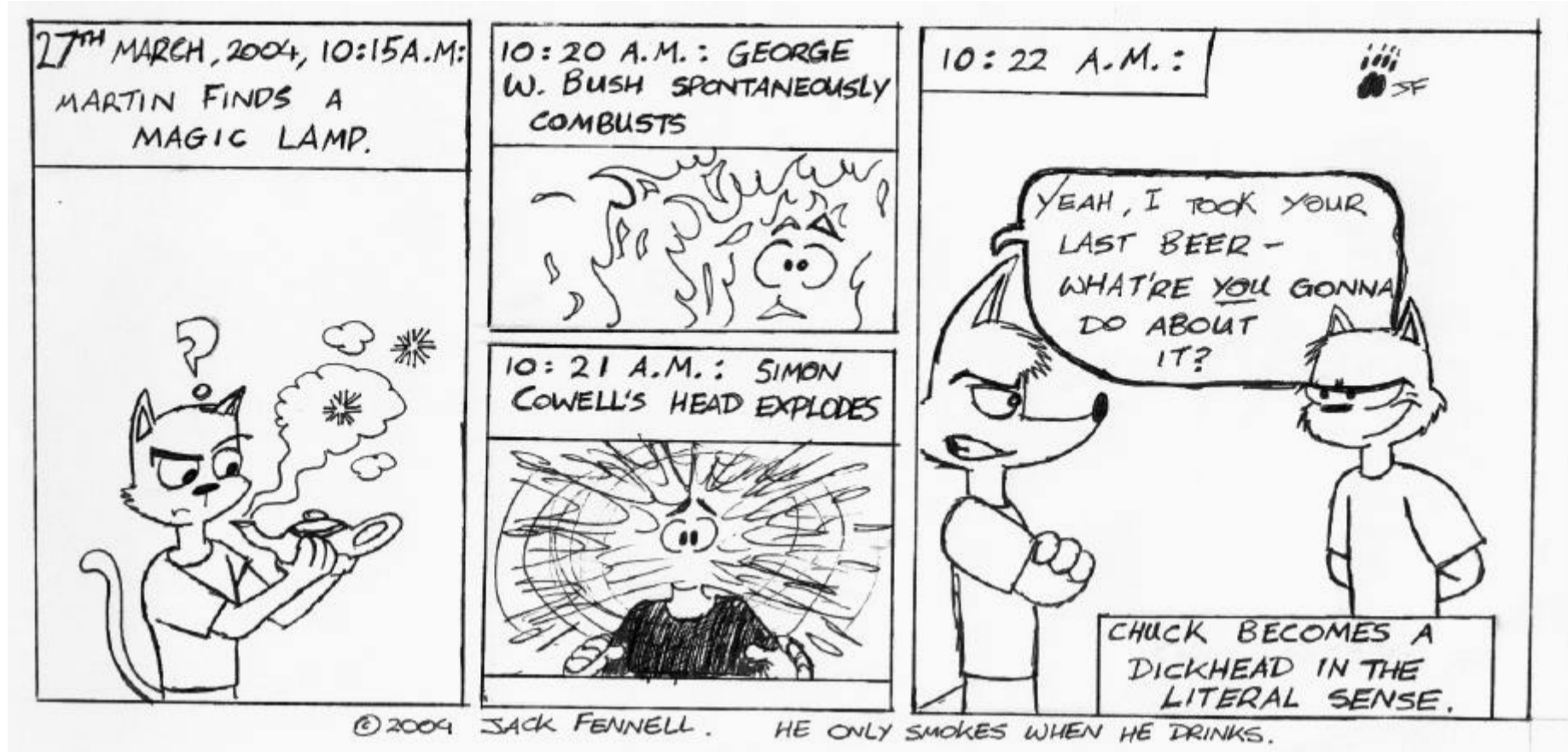
THE MOST ANNOYING CHILDRENS TV SHOW.

DOWN



COMPILED BY NERESH AND SARAH CAREW WITH HELP FROM 38 KV. TEXT UR SUGGESTIONS TO 086 8641193

Back Inside



Campus News (with Val)

New Lodge Couple Have Drunkenness in Common

A romantic liaison that was initiated in The Lodge Niteclub was made possible by a shared state of inebriation. Although first year Thomas Quinlan had never met fellow fresher Elaine Burke before that evening, reports suggest that the two hit it off immediately due to their mutual intoxication.

"It was like they knew straight away they held this common bond," stated one onlooker. "Maybe it was their glazed look that was a hint they might be soulmates?" "There was definitely some kind of almost telepathic connection between them that they were compatible," she added.

Indeed the magnetism was so great that the two did not even feel the need to converse with each other before advancing their relationship. "He just stumbled over to her and started dancing with her," described one witness. "Then before you knew he stuck the head. It was incredible. I guess that is what they call love at first sight."

After fifteen minutes the two exchanged names before Mr Quinlan and Miss Burke continued their romantic dancefloor rendezvous. "It was great that they had so much in common," commented a close friend of Miss Burke. "Elaine enjoys classical music and poetry but apparently Thomas thinks such things are for 'pansies'. Also he was wearing a rugby shirt and Elaine hates rugby. You might assume the relationship had no chance but then they did have an extreme state of drunkenness in common."

At the end of the evening Miss Burke acquired Mr Quinlan's mobile number but upon reaching a greater level of sobriety whilst eating a curry chip in Superdine she reportedly told friends she would "probably lose it".

Despite this setback romantics hold out hopes the two star-crossed lovers may still have a future. "If they are ever in The Lodge again together and drunk then who knows what will happen," stated a close friend of Miss Burke.

Exciting Game of Hangman Interrupted by Tutor's Question

Louise Kiely's exhilarating game of 'Hangman' was suddenly interrupted by a question on Freud's theories last Wednesday afternoon. Unable to answer or even comprehend the question successfully, Miss Kiely now fears she has lost face with her tutor as well as losing concentration and ultimately the game in question.

"About half way through my tutorial my mind started to wander," explained the third-year. "Just as I was thinking which vowel I was going to guess, Professor Byrne came into my consciousness - I suddenly realised he was saying something about this Freud guy." The incident swiftly reached crisis level when Professor Byrne, added the name 'Louise' at the end of his sentence and raised his voice to indicate a question mark. "I had no idea what the question was, never mind the answer," admitted Miss Kiely, who also enjoys playing "X's and O's" and "Dots".

"After a prolonged glance down at my notes, which I soon realised were upside down and covered in doodles, I said I didn't really know. I chewed my pen and tried to look thoughtful. It really was an acutely uncomfortable situation." Miss Kiely now hopes to separate her degree and extra-curricular activities more successfully, as well as spending more time preparing for tutorials.

Meanwhile Professor Byrne, was unable to remember the incident when questioned by 'An Focal'. He did admit that the class was "taking a while to find their feet", as well as confessing he had "never really liked" and "didn't really care" about the classic classroom game at the centre of the embarrassment.

Special Guest Speaker God fails to draw crowds to ULSU talk.

Six students were the sole attendees to the most recent ULSU talk, despite the headline speaker being the supreme deity. God spoke in a sparsely populated Jonathan Swift Theatre at an event that failed to draw in the crowds.

After being introduced by ULSU President Eoin Ó Broin as a "nebulous elemental being able to exercise supreme power over the entire cosmos who needs no introduction", God addressed the listeners on the topic of 'Look at me, see I really exist'. The six strong audience of SU executive members described the Father of all mankind's address as "inspiring". "There was some pretty good stuff going on there," stated one, "but he needs to get with it a bit more. Some of his jokes might have worked three thousand years ago but not anymore."

In a question and answers session God allegedly then solved the problems of the inconsistencies between the Old and New Testaments, dropped in the date of the Second Coming and was about to tackle the issue of 'Heaven: Does it really exist?' when time ran out.

The notoriously reclusive omnipotent being admitted afterwards that he had been a "little nervous" about speaking to such highly intelligent and educated students at U.L.

Mr Ó Broin remained philosophical about the poor turnout to the Outreach programme event. "We had to pull some strings to get God to turn up," he said, "it was quite embarrassing to be honest." "I think next time we might be better off playing down the talking bit and putting more emphasis on the post-meeting drinks," he mused.

***Don't believe everything you read in the paper!**

Apologies to crossword freaks and fans of An Bainisteoir and Fr. Wendy. They're all on holidays and will back next issue.

Communications Group
next meeting:
Wednesday
Week 6
6pm
Communications Office

Credit Where Credit is Due

News Writers

Niamh Clowry, David Garrahy
Sarah Ryan, Ana Cuevas Romo

Features Writers

Jenny Hannon, Keith Whelan
Fiachra O'Luain, Emma Stafford
Valerie Gunning

View Writers

Gabbie Ni Riain, Keith Whelan
Niall Murphy

Proofreaders

Grace Loftus, Thanael McKarel
Stuart Wallace, Sandra Gannon

Graphics

Nersh

Cartoonist

Jack Fennell

Editor Sarah Ryan

Sabbatical Reports

PRESIDENT - EOIN

People,

The last fortnight has been a mix of social functions and preliminary meetings on student issues such as with the Dean's of Education, Science & Engineering over a litany of Student Teacher issues, with Physiotherapy students over their placement costs, attending the Clubs & Societies ball and a number of Women's Week events plus having dinner with former President of Poland, Mr. Lech Walesa who was visiting the region as part of a twinning with his province of Gdansk.



I attended the Irish Education Forum in UCD last Friday too and the Your Education (www.youreducation.ie) Plenary in the Castletroy Park Hotel the Friday before. The focus at the latter was the lack of resources for primary & second level schools around the country with David & I speaking about Noel Dempsey's privatisation agenda, about the deplorable way that the Irish language is taught in schools and about the need for a Teaching Practice Allowance for UL's Student Teachers.

The Education forum in Dublin focused on the consequences of privatisation of education and the need to move away from the annual tokenistic student marches & the futility of lobbying against fees and to establish a broad coalition of support among parents, taxpayers and school students against fees & privatisation. The forum finished with a picket outside the meeting of European Ministers of Education that was taking place in Dublin Castle and a mock auction of UCD, TCD, NCAD, GMIT and CIT to the "investors" assembled;-)

The High Court has given the go-ahead to a challenge being heard against the alterations to the Back to Education Allowance that Minister Mary Coughlan brought in last year. The appellants are a group of mature students from different colleges around the country who argue that they began their third level courses on the assumption that they would keep the BTEA all year round for the duration of their undergraduate degree and for one postgrad degree and as such have now been disenfranchised by the changes which stop the BTEA for the summer months and all postgrads except HDips.

Have a great Kollege week next week! If you want to warm up for the festivities it's RAG Week at the Art College this week and by all accounts they have a marquee. Lucky them!

Lastly & importantly if you would like to be writing this column/editorial next year and have any queries about the responsibilities involved see article inside and call in to me. We certainly want you!

Slan,
Eoin

DEPUTY/WELFARE - DAVID



One of the most rewarding parts of my job is the ability to make people think different. The ability to give people new experiences and have an impact on their lives. It's one of the great things about being Welfare Officer and it's why I went for the job in the first place. I would encourage you most strongly to put your name forward for any of the SU positions next week if you

feel you have a contribution to make. Anyway there is more about that inside.

In Week 4 we were lucky enough that Gareth O'Callaghan, 2FM DJ came to speak at UL about his experience of depression. It was an extremely revealing experience and taught me a lot that I didn't know before about mental health issues. One in four of us will suffer from some mental health disease at some point in our lives. If you do think you might be at risk the counselling service is there to help, it's no shame; it's part of normal life. Also during Week 4, members of the Peace Society organised events in conjunction with Women's Week. Many congratulations on their efforts that raised both awareness and money! Also well done to the Drama Society who's "Little Shop of Horrors" was absolutely magnificent.

It is Kollege Week next week and I would recommend you all to enjoy yourself out there. But one little niggly thing, please remember that alcohol is depressant drug.

This means too much can alter your moods and mess with your head in ways that are not good. We all have limits and it's important to respect these, or you can end up doing stupid things. And for example even I can't persuade the US embassy to give you a J1 with a conviction for drunk and disorderly - so be careful! Also remember to keep an eye on your drink at all times. Kollege Week is about charity so please give what you can to the charity collectors on campus.

Lastly if you have had any problems with prescriptions in the Medical Centre please get in touch with me.

suwelfare@ul.ie

COMMS & CAMPAIGNS - SARAH



Hey everyone,

Before you even ask, yes, the website is almost ready, it's going through testing as you read this, so keep clicking on www.ulsu.ul.ie over the next couple of days and one day you'll be just astounded at how wonderful the new site is. Thanks again to the Cheshire Tomás Breen, who has put in great work on it. Yes, you'll just have to take my word for it for now!

On the Communications front, there is one thing I'd really like to get across to everyone, especially over the next couple of weeks.

Please respect the right of your neighbours to a decent night's sleep. Please respect your neighbours' property and feelings. If someone asks you to turn down the music, there's a reason for it. Hedges are not beds, especially if you don't own the hedge. Wheelie Bins are not public property, and they're definitely not bonfire-fodder. Lamp-posts and stop signs are there for a reason, not for the purposes of being randomly uprooted. Roofs are not for urinating off, and bottles are not for throwing.

You may never have done anything worse than pick your nose on the bus, but I'd ask you to keep this in mind anyway, just in case someone tries to convince you that water-bombing the kids next door is a valid Kollege Week entertainment.

Other than that, enjoy the entertainments, try the bungee jump, give the egg and spoon race a shot, mind your drinks, get gunged, be the naked guy/girl on stage kissing a black pudding, give money to charity, don't let your buddies go home with dodgy types, and have a great week...

Sarah

EDUCATION - MADELINE

Hello Schmeers!

Kollege Week takes place in Week 7 this year. It's a feast of mayhem during the day with bungee jumping, mudwrestling, hypnotists and UL's first Sports Day on the Thursday, with quality nights out in city nightclubs at nighttime. Buses are there to pick you up and drop you off safely!!!



And here is the line-up

Tuesday is the Back to School Party in Trinity Rooms (EUR8)

Wednesday is the SuperHeroes Party in Trinity Rooms (EUR8)

Thursday night has 2 options:

Pimps and Hoes night in the Trinity Rooms (with Ugly Duckling - LA Hip-Hop legends - EUR10)

UL Sports Day night in the Market. (EUR8)

Tickets are on sale UPSTAIRS in ROOM 5 in the Students' Union during the day, and they're going quick so bag 'em while you can!

If you want to brave the Bungee Jump, get your form at Students' Union reception. You won't regret it!!!

And PLEASE remember that not all your neighbours share your enthusiasm for the Fields of Athenry at 4am!

Respect the people who are finishing FYPs, working the next day or who just want to get a night's sleep.

There will be a strong Garda presence in the housing estates surrounding the campus so acting the maggot could land you in serious trouble!

The University Discipline Committee gets a lot of its cases from incidents that happen during the week which can result in suspension.

We're only warning ye in advance, better to be safe than sorry!

On that note enjoy the week that's what it's for!!!! Just remember to be safe and look after each other!!

Thanks for reading, and have a great week!

Madeline