

hemlock...

Nirimba Students Newspaper Oct/Nov 2003



ELECTION EDITION

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Presidents Report



Well the year is slowly starting to draw to a close, with this being the last edition of Hemlock for the year. Looking back over the year a great deal has been done, being both won and lost.

As President of your student body I am proud to say that your elected student council has put in a lot of hard work and effort to make your campus a more enjoyable and fun place to be. The efforts of your representa-

tives are largely unnoticed, as much of their involvement takes place behind the scenes as they lobby in your favour; however, without their commitment to campus life many of the activities and amusements you currently enjoy would not be present.

There are many points that I could discuss in relation to the events and activities that were organized for you, the student body, throughout the year. However, there is one point in particular that I feel is a great obstacle our campus faces and that requires further attention; this issue is PARTICIPATION, or the lack thereof. Throughout the year I have been talking about it with students, writing about it in articles, and simply requesting it from the students, unfortunately to no avail. Why might this be? Is it that the activities, services, and facilities are not in place? That is not the case.

Ample has been done this year to accommodate all of the needs of our members; Cultural events, harbour cruises, sporting events, bar nights, tours, services and resources, in fact to many to mention, and all provided for you! However, the majority of the student population is content to sit back and do nothing, except take part in the regular whinge and whine. I must say that the complacency and apathy that I see in many of the students around me is quite astounding. Is it our job to hold your hands and personally walk you down to the events that are organized? I understand that most students are too cool and too good to be seen getting involved, and indeed I am sure you are very cool, but do you not think that you could get more out of your time here?

For as long as I have been here, participation has been poor, and I understand that may be the community culture; however I strongly urge you to attempt to make change within this campus. There is so much potential and so much for you to benefit from, and all you have to do is show up, it really is not very difficult. With the weeks of semester drawing to a close I would encourage you all to take advantage of what is left. I encourage you to get involved and throw yourself into what is offered. In all seriousness, is sitting back and being cool really that fun and rewarding?

On a more positive note I sincerely hope that the remaining weeks are beneficial academically, with assignments and exam preparation well under control. For those of you who will be graduating after this semester, I hope that your future career path will be enjoyable and fulfilling. To those of you who are back again next year I would encourage you to consider joining the Nirimba Students Association, by running in the upcoming elections. To everyone good luck in whatever your path may be, and hopefully I will see you all at the end of year ball.

Luke Costello
President

EDITORS REPORT

Hello Everyone,

Hope that the semester break left you all refreshed and ready for the hard slog to the end. As you have noticed by now this Hemlock is a special Election Edition as elections are rapidly approaching and I would encourage everyone to get involved by either nominating themselves or voting.

This is the last Hemlock of the year, and as you have also already noticed it has been produced in a new newsletter format. We have learnt a lot this year, and I think Hemlock has come a long way. Next year there will be a number of changes made to Hemlock, and I would ask anyone to give us any suggestions you might have and let me know if you would like to get involved in any way.

Best of luck to everyone in their final essays and exams, and farewell to all those who have completed their studies. To the rest, hope you all have a relaxing holiday and see you again next year.

Jenny Perkin
Publication Officer



Sports and Leisure – Year in Review



Hello again, it seems like the year has just started and now it is coming to an end, how time flies when you are busy. With our elections upon us it is a timely opportunity to recap what has happened in the year to date and hopefully give you an indication of what your elected student representatives have been up to all year.



We started this year with the gym opening half way through the first semester. We have been pushing the proverbial up hill for five years to get it up and running and finally the day came, and what a day it was. We had a pool party and BBQ and so on planned and it absolutely flogged down. Not to be put back we carried on and now we have a gym facility that serves the student population on our campus. It is a temporary measure but it contains the latest gym equipment, and we are working on the plans for the permanent sports facility, which will be located beside the pool.



Aside from the gym most of our energies were focused on sports and leisure programs for the year. We had the University games in Port Macquarie during the semester break, the ski trip last month and social sport during the week, not to mention the sports teams that represented our campus in the local competitions during the week and on the weekends. The year as a whole has been a learning exercise for our association as we are growing steadily and hopefully we have set up some systems that will carry us forward into the future and beyond.



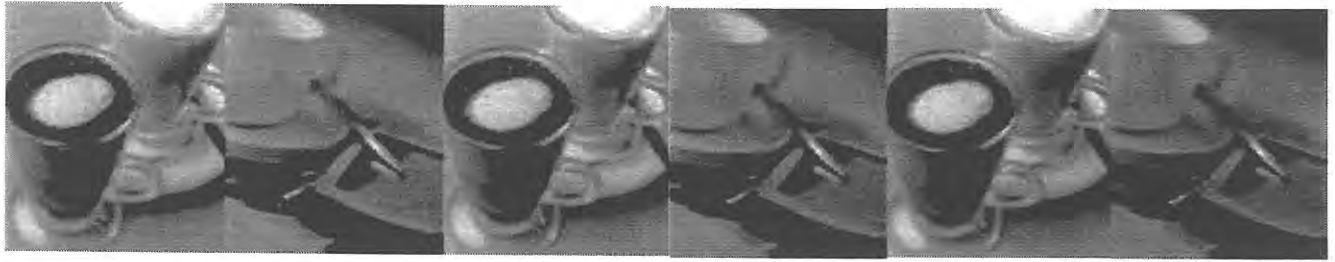
In regards to the coming elections I would encourage all interested in running for a position on the student association to pop down to the Fish Bowl in C21 and pick up a nominations form that contains information on the process and so on. If you have any further queries please pop in and see our friendly staff at the pool or come into our offices in C21 and as to see some student representatives and have a chat.



Trevor Mullins

SAUWS Nirimba Vice President – Sports and Leisure

"Get involved in our Sports and Leisure Clubs"



Services & Facilities Report

My name is Goce Sengulovski and I am the current Vice President of the Services and Facilities Committee at the Student Association of UWS Nirimba.

I just finished my Bus-Management on campus and I am looking forward to the upcoming graduation ceremony. I had three great years at Nirimba, but all good things come to end, so I hope all the hard work, the joy and the frustrations will pay off.

We've had a very interesting year, with lots of changes, events and people. The cafeteria finally got air-conditioning, the courtyard got covered, the Precinct store saw some improvements, and we had some changes in the bar: painted with new more vibrant colors, different seating arrangements, foxtel, live bands, and new and decent coffee.

Probably the most satisfying moment of the year for me personally, was the introduction of the new coffee on campus. For few years, students and staff could not get a proper cup of coffee on campus. This year we finally managed to get a decent coffee on campus and the feedback was and is phenomenal.

During my two years with the Student Association, I had the pleasure to work with some wonderful people and anybody who was and is involved with the association can confirm this. Like with everything else in life, there some good and bad aspects of being student representative. Most of it is positive and I encourage everyone to run for the new student council. The basic duties for the student representatives are to attend committee meetings and participate in the decision making process on the council. The experience, the pleasure and the benefits that students get from this are enormous and while people do not understand and appreciate this when they first start, I am sure they will later in life.

I am leaving Nirimba with sadness and pride, sadness because I am leaving, and pride because I was a part of something that contributed enormously to improving the student life on campus. I hope when I come back in few years I will see this place even better and bigger. Good luck to everyone and thanks.

Goce Sengulovski

Vice President-Services & Facilities Committee

**Hemlock...your newspaper
your say**

UNI-LINK

– Undergraduate Representative & Welfare Committee

The second semester for Uni-Link is shaping up to be quite exciting. Despite a slow start to the year it seems as though having jumped through a few hurdles we are on the way to achieving the mandate of our committee. Having solidified our goals and reoriented ourselves over the last month we are now on track and are genuinely looking forward to the coming two months and beyond. We hope that through our effort we may be of service to the campus and contribute to its development.

The last month has offered up a few challenges to Uni-Link, not the least of which is a change of Vice President. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen events Shazaad, our previous VP, had to step down. Despite this, however, the committee is determined to stay focused and we have solidified our vision so as to achieve our goals.

Following is an extract from the last Vice President's report to Campus Council outlining the vision for the fulfilment of our goals and responsibilities as the Uni-Link committee.

We hope that, despite the recent events we will continue to be productive in our role of student advocacy and support. We already have in place... a framework for future activities, and an agenda to fulfil. Uni-Link will continue to be a positive and productive committee of the Student Association Nirimba.

...we will make an effort to see that Uni-Link is well known to both student and staff at UWS Nirimba.

It is our hope to encourage students to nurture, on campus, an environment of solidarity through the establishment of clubs.

We hope to build on the work done...in organising resource material for the students.

As per our wish to establishing a Web presence, we as a committee have material ready for publishing on the Student Association site.

Beyond our general outlook to the future of our committee, and in meeting with some of our specific goals, the coming months are set to be very busy. We have two major events organised, one of which is likely to have happened by the time this



article is published. Our cultural event, linked loosely to our cultural office and took place on the 25th of September, was a great celebration of the diverse cultures on campus. Secondly, our Ramadan event, happening late October and designed as a



religious awareness day, will focus on providing a healthy start to

Ramadan for our Muslim students through the provision of food and entertainment. I personally am hoping that a majority of persons on campus will take part in these two events and have a great time in doing so.

Well, the future of our committee is looking bright, and whether it is me or another student who continues as Vice President, I am hoping that Uni-Link can continue to support the university's interests. Through the achievement of our goals and ability to work as a group and as part of the greater Student Association we have the ability to impact people's lives for the better. We, with the help of everyone on campus can make our university an example on what can be achieved through solidarity and effort.

Yours in service,

Michael Baker (Vice President Uni-Link, the Student Association of UWS Nirimba)

Activities Report

by Jason Allan

As you are all probably aware the Student Association Elections for the 2003/04 period is fast approaching. What this means for you? As part of the student population, all those questions you have always wanted to raise can and will be addressed, and if you have always felt strongly about a particular topic, then why not nominate yourself for a position on the committee.

As Activities Officer for 2003, I have encountered many challenging situations, such as researching key dates within the year, for instance the recent Blue Stocking Week Morning Tea and ladies convention with guest speaker. As with all events planned for the year, the calendar has to be constructed and organised into a neat little package that doesn't interfere with the other committees. Getting to know the rest of the Students' Association Committee and communicating with them at regular intervals basically achieve this. I think that one of the hardest things I have been confronted with this year to date is getting the students motivated and willing to participate in the events provided.

But on the same accord I have enjoyed many rewarding moments throughout this position. These entail being able to increase the quality of life, social prowess and interaction of the students, especially around the C21 area. Over the past year, we the Student Association have strived to inform the students of our identity and what we can do for them. I think we have moved a long way since the start of the last elected committee and I would be disappointed if this trend were not to continue.

The biggest buzz I have received to date is that I overheard a student say on the way to the cafeteria "lets go and see what's on at the bar today", for a student to

say something to this affect I know that I have done my job well.

However there are some bad aspects that come with the position, including the fact that you have no control over crowd attendance. As Activities Officer this was probably my biggest fear every time I put on an event, because if you didn't get a required estimation of the numbers you thought would attend you can't really justify the use of student funds to facilitate such an event and in the end it all reflects back on yourself and the way you market each and every event.

In conjunction this position has improved my managerial skills, leadership and communicational techniques and I would not have got this experience if I didn't stand up and say "Hey I want to get involved, I want to change the way things have been ran in the past and I want to be responsible for being part of a team that will improve this campus and continue to do so". In addition to the little benefits mentioned, it looks great in your resume or CV and when it comes time to spread your wings after graduation or your looking for that lucrative scholarship during your time at UWS Nirimba, this is the perfect outlet to put yourself above the rest of the candidates.

However my time as Activities Officer is not over yet, and the month of October is going to be jammed packed full of entertainment and activities, so stay tuned for more information in the not so distant future. Below are just a few of the events planned for the up and coming months and I encourage you all to attend and be active within this community of ours and not only that have some fun at the same time. We also have some great talent being displayed on Thursday lunch-times with LIVE TAFE bands and performances.

On that note I would like to say have an excellent October and please seriously consider running for Student Association Elections.



Peter Powers Hypnotist – May 2003

Thursday 16th October 2003

- ❖ Tommy Madison will be performing some amazing illusions with real LIVE animals in the Bar during the common lunch time.

Thursday 23rd October 2003

- ❖ Barn Dance Have you got what it takes to conquer the bucking BULL!!

Monday 27th October 2003

- ❖ The inaugural Student Association Harbour Cruise More details next page.



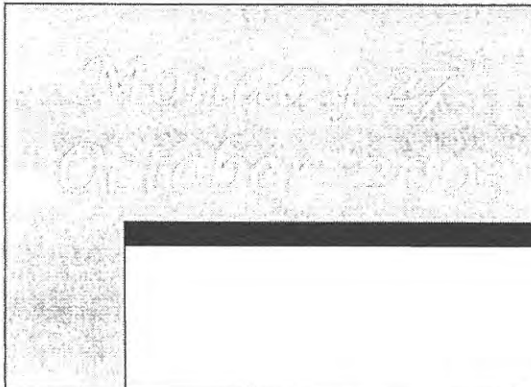
Students' Association of UWS Nirimba Campus

Welcomes you to the end of year *BALL*

HARBOUR CRUISE aboard LADY ROSE

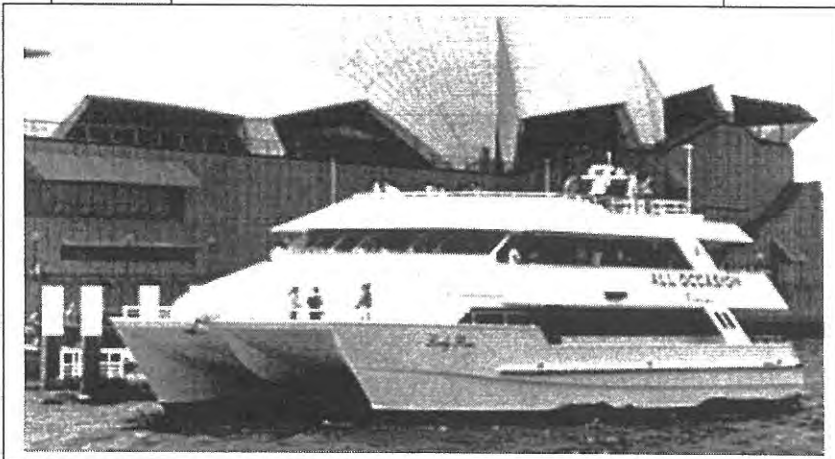


Free return bus service leaves from Campus Security @ 6pm SHARP!
Full Buffet Dinner, House Spirits, Australian Wine, Beer and Soft Drinks included all evening! Live DJ and Light Show! Dress is Semi-Formal!!



\$20 PER PERSON
(on presentation of student card)

Departs Star City Casino Wharf at
7:30p.m, returns at 11:30p.m



Lady Rose is a 3 Level
Super Catamaran
With Dance floors,
spacious wrap around
decks and full 360
degree views of Sydney's
Harbour front!



**Students' Association
of UWS Nirimba
Campus Inc**

New photocopy service in the Fishbowl

**Only 9
cents
per
copy**

**From Tues 7th
October 2003**

**Two photocopiers ..
no waiting**

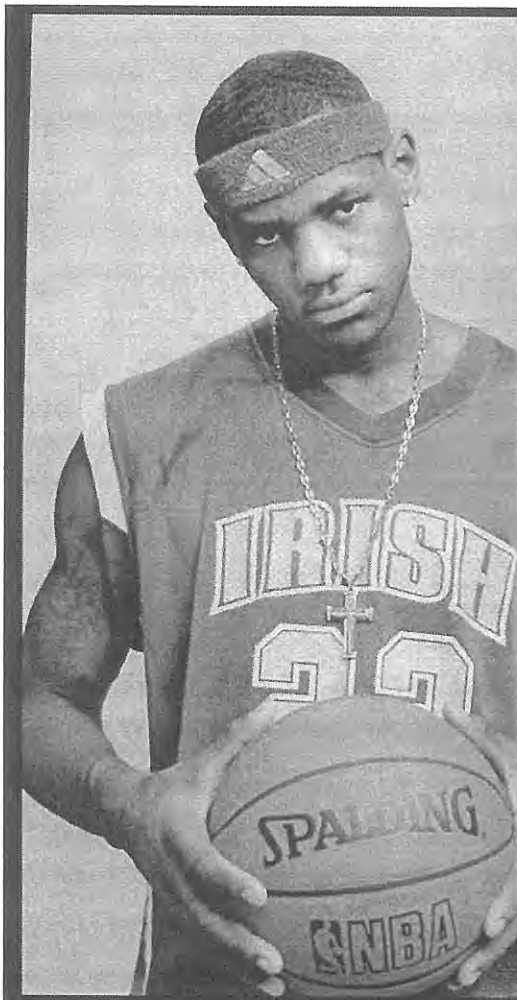
**Overhead &
Binding Service
available too**

**Use Your University
Card....no need to buy
a separate photocopy
card.**

*** Cards can be recharged in the
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For more information:
Drop into the Fishbowl in Building C21 opposite the Library or email
fishbowl@uws.edu.au or phone 9852-4070

nirimba
students' association of UWS nirimba campus



Haven't we been here before? Oh wait, that was Vince Carter. Or was it Grant Hill? I forget. Ever since that famous North Carolina Tar Heel burst onto the NBA scene and forged his legacy of titles, endorsements & individual achievements, the many fans supporting the many teams of the NBA have been patiently waiting for an impact player in the mould of Mike to carry their team upon his back, bringing success to their town and bragging rights to the NBA title. Of course, no player around Jordan's size & position has been able to repeat that just yet with the weight solely upon them. Kobe Bryant has managed to win three rings thus far, but he's had Shaquille O'Neal to watch his back. The Lakers' predicament without Shaq during last season shows how KB8 can't do it on his own, at least for now. Allen Iverson would be considered closer to Jordan in terms of workload and intensity, but it's all too much for a man his size, regardless of his often amazing ability for shot-taking. And arguably the best guard in the league, Tracy McGrady, could only manage to get his Orlando Magic squad into the Eighth Seed in the Eastern conference this season past. During Jordan's absences through the years, dominant big men like Hakeem Olajuwon, Shaquille O'Neal & Tim Duncan have captured the Larry O'Brien trophy. I do not ignore the fact that Jordan had Scottie Pippen, Horace Grant, Ron Harper, B.J. Armstrong, Toni Kukoc & John Paxson around him at different times during his 6 title runs, but on whom did the weight always fall upon? Number 23, of course.

LeBron James: The next Michael Jordan??

Which brings me to King James. His name may be familiar from the evening news, where LeBron was shown in all his glory ipping down slams during high school games. His new deal with Nike was mentioned (which is reportedly worth a cool US \$90 million), and the fact he wears number 23 just like his idol, you know who. The report reeked of the US hype surrounding LeBron, who's been covered by Inside Sports, had a diary inside SLAM magazine, and has been documented by goodness knows how many other American sport tabloids over the past year or so. His appearance on the recent MTV award ceremony shows how well known he's become. Oh, and if you don't know, he's only 18 years old. If you've ever seen Spike Lee's '98 film 'He Got Game', you've got slight insight into how LeBron would be feeling about going pro right now.

Now LeBron's been selected by the Cleveland Cavaliers, who floundered in the bottom of the NBA cellar last season. Nobody expects LeBron to carry the Cavs to the playoffs this coming season, but undoubtedly many haters will be smiling if he doesn't keep pace with media & societal expectations. Even Michael himself has been talking smack about the hype of LeBron before he was drafted.

No doubt, the sight of a prodigal player trying to lead a floundering team in a red no. 23 jersey will lead many heads to unjustifiably expect the precedence laid down in the mid to late 80s by His Airness. But before you fill up on the hatorade if he doesn't average 20+ till his 3rd year, just remember that Jordan laid out his own legacy. Jordan wasn't compared to another player because his talent and flair let out enough volume. Let LeBron shape his own superstar mould, and try to resist measuring LeBron to Michael's unmistakable cast.

By Mark Pullen

The Napster Debate. Again.



I think it's the avid music fan that has the most confused opinion of whether Napster-style file-sharing is wrong or right. Most everyone else seems to think 'Yay for Napster!' and that's pretty self explanatory. Napster - and its hybrids - provided the wider community with access to single files for free, rather than just the singles for \$4.95, or whole albums for free - rather than close to \$30. So who is really losing out here??

Well, there are two - the record companies and the artist. Realistically though, I don't think the majority of us care much about the record companies losing out. Record companies, at least the big five that sued Napster, seem to have no real interest in the music or the artist (or originality for that matter) but rather in the money made from them. I think Radiohead summed up the idiocracy of copyright laws and the music industry in the sleeve of OK Computer "lyrics used by kind permission even though we wrote them." The big five are not really the primary concern for me.

But the artists are the primary concern. For every CD that's downloaded instead of bought, that's one less portion of royalty check that isn't paid to the artist. Which goes the same for piracy too, but that's a whole other issue. Every song you download costs the artist. **I think it was Anton LaVey that said that if something is free for you, it's because someone else is paying for it.** This is the base for the Napster court trial. The more downloads, the more the artist has to pay.

The big five's primary point was that Napster decreased CD sales; Napster's primary defense was that it encouraged CD sales. Yeah, well... hmmm. There are the fans, and then there are real fans. I think the average person is going to pick download over 'cheque, savings or credit?'. When Radiohead's Hail to the Thief album was leaked months before its actual release, I didn't download a copy. And when I went to buy my copy from HMV, I couldn't help but think that some people probably didn't buy the album because they already had it. On the other hand, when the new A Perfect Circle album Thirteenth Step was leaked two weeks before release date, I had a copy. But I went and bought it the day it was in stores. And I know, being the final version of the album that had been leaked that some people would probably rather pay nothing and not buy it.

What the record companies fail to understand is that there are people out there that really want music. A Perfect Circle is one of my favourite bands, and the thought of hearing their music as soon as possible was probably my first thought. Not, 'Oh my gosh, I should probably wait until it's put out by the record companies!'. The fact is that most people who downloaded it probably bought it. I know for a fact that of all the A Perfect Circle fans that I knew had a downloaded copy, we all bought the actual version. And I think that most fans are probably like me. We just want the music, and will buy the album when it's out. But if I can get my grubby little hands on a copy before they put it in stores, I'll get it. What those companies also fail to realise that the world is and also includes, countries other than America. For American bands, music is released up to weeks before other countries, and that's like holding bait in front of a fish. It's there on line and you want it. And you'll take it because it's not in stores yet. **They also fail to realise that**

for up-and-coming bands, file sharing is one of the few ways to get your music out

there. Many of the biggest bands today contest that the internet and file-sharing was probably how they got big, bar their performances in a live setting.

But I think the main thing that record companies are doing wrong is avoiding the main reason why people are turning to free file sharing to begin with. The cost of a CD these days is amazing. Your average CD at HMV ranges from about \$25 to \$35. The Australian Music Industry prides itself on reducing import CDs and keeping all the money inside Australia, and most people find this okay. But most people don't realise that imported CD's would actually be cheaper than the home-made variety. I was shocked to find this out only last December when I was in Singapore at HMV there, where imported CDs were noticeably cheaper than the Made-in-Singapore type. What really gets under my skin though is the fact that HMV, Sanity, and all the bigger named CD stores can sell a CD at \$32, where JB Hi-Fi can still afford to sell the same new release at \$25. I know where I'm taking my money. And that's only because I can't pay that same \$32 to my favourite artists directly. But this is on another tangent, that calls for another 500 words.

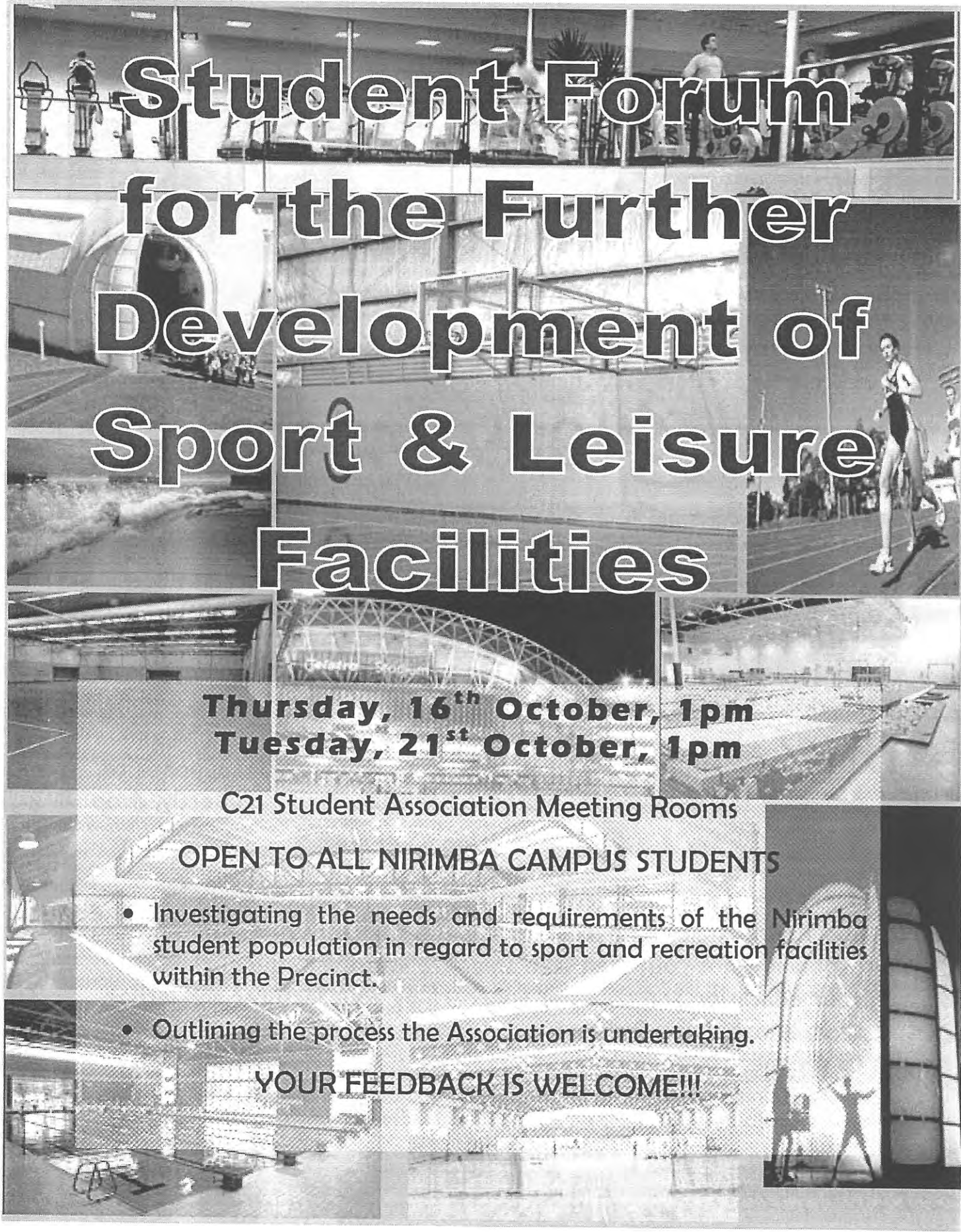
But now there's this thing that's kind of a Sushi-Train-pay-for-what-you-choose kind of thing that the internet music industry has to offer to counteract the copyright laws: 'only \$1.25 per download' was what was advertised to me. That's still quite a lot for something that I can get free elsewhere. And I'm not extremely slow, but say your average CD has 12 songs, that's \$15 dollars. This got me thinking that either

- 1) Someone's losing out, or if not then,
- 2) Why aren't all CD's this cheap?

So whatever happens, file sharing is still an open debate, and it has it's merits and it's downfalls. But in the end, every song we download instead of pay for is money not going to your favourite artist.

By Urmila Suthakar





Student Forum for the Further Development of Sport & Leisure Facilities

Thursday, 16th October, 1pm
Tuesday, 21st October, 1pm

C21 Student Association Meeting Rooms

OPEN TO ALL NIRIMBA CAMPUS STUDENTS

- Investigating the needs and requirements of the Nirimba student population in regard to sport and recreation facilities within the Precinct.
- Outlining the process the Association is undertaking.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS WELCOME!!!

Welfare Officer

Emma McCloy

Appointments: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (available other times via email) nirimbawelfare@uws.edu.au



9852-4046

Important
things to
consider
during this
time of year

- If you have suffered extenuating circumstances during your studies this semester you will need to lodge your application for special consideration soon.
- If you are having problems such as withheld results due to fees that you have been asked to pay but you are not supposed to, or fees that you have paid but have been allocated incorrectly, drop in and see me.
- If you are having difficulties with a unit and feel that many others are also having the same difficulties (i.e. the structure of the unit is the problem – not you) then take an active interest in the quality of your education and consider approaching your lecturer and letting them know. If you feel that you still have unresolved issues drop in to see me.



In a year that has seen so many exciting major releases the new A Perfect Circle album is certainly one I have most eagerly anticipated. *Thirteenth Step* is a more experimental album than 2000 debut *Mer de Noms*, and captures a more raw, earthy sound. This time around Maynard James Keenan (of Tool fame) and Billy Howerdel again cover most the songwriting duties, and are joined by drummer Josh Freese and Jeordie White (AKA Twiggy Ramirez formerly of Marilyn Manson) on bass. As if this isn't impressive enough, APC's live line up now includes former Smashing Pumpkins guitarist James Iha.

The album opens with highlight 'The Package', a unique bass driven epic that erupts into a display of big Sabbath-esque guitars. Next is the first single 'Weak and Powerless', a beautiful, warm sounding and largely acoustic song that I was initially unsure of but works so well in the context of the album. Another highlight is 'The Noose', a mellow, haunting track that is reminiscent of Fragile-era Nine Inch Nails. Songs such as this on the album serve to confirm in my mind Maynard as being the best vocalist who has ever walked the earth. He experiments with his voice on this album in a way he never has on any Tool or APC release, and we can see a new side of his range on songs like 'A Stranger'. A drifting acoustic piece that focuses largely on Maynard's voice with little background, 'A Stranger' is one of the most moving pieces of music I have heard in a while.

Thirteenth Step is a very diverse album, perhaps at the expense of the continuity of the first album, but absolutely brilliant nonetheless. A couple of tracks let down the standard of the rest of the album, namely the corny tongue-in-cheek (I hope!) cover of Failure's 'The Nurse Who Loved Me' which would have worked much better as a b-side and the annoying 2 minute "miscellaneous" track 'Lullaby'. However there is always the skip button, and the rest of the album doesn't disappoint in the least. 'The Outsider' is an infectious and near perfect stadium rock song that has single written all over it, which indeed will be the case as it will be available in stores soon. Other standouts are the dark, menacing rocker 'Pet' and mesmerising soundscape piece 'Vanishing' that features some very impressive vocal arrangements.

This is an album that draws you in deep, and because of the variety of styles and unconventional songs it is not an album that you will get sick of easily. The last time A Perfect Circle toured I tragically missed out because I was underage, but luckily it has recently been announced that they will be returning next year for the Big Day Out festival. I would urge anyone who is curious to check them out not only because they have proven themselves a top class band with two incredible albums, but also to see a collection of exceptional musicians in their full glory.

By Jenny Perkin
Publications Officer

Reelife From the Mouths of Youths

By Michelle J. Yan

It's that time of the year again, time to soak up all the wonderful cinematic array of creative talent. It's *Reelife* short film festival time! This year's annual festival marks the second festival featuring the best and most recent short films created by young people around the nation.

Young filmmakers, 25 years and under, both experienced and inexperienced and from rural and metropolitan NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia have been invited to take part in this unique event and have submitted films up to ten minutes in duration.

Whilst there are over three-hundred film festivals in Australia annually, *Reelife* is a film festival with a difference. A couple of years ago whilst on holiday at Byron Bay, *Reelife* was borne as the brainchild of law student, Dee Jefferson, who believes that the role film plays in our society is profound. "I feel so strongly about film as a medium because I think that it has the power to connect the viewer with the perspective and experience of someone else - and that ability to imagine someone else's experience is the basis for empathy and understanding within the community," she says.

Initially, the festival "started as a concept for campus filmmaking" but has since grown rapidly and "expanded into a more general call for entries." Not styled on the Hollywood blockbuster or purely for budgetary or production ends, *Reelife* is a forum specifically designed, created and produced by Australia's youth as a site for creative, political and cultural expression of thoughts, experiences and ideas. Dee says, "*Reelife* is differentiated from the rest of the short film festival market by being something run by youth, for youth, and by focusing on film as a medium for social change." *Reelife* challenges the mainstream film industry's values on high commercialism and injects central values of talent and originality into its program. As Dee suggests, "[t]here are a lot of short film festivals that, as they become larger, become increasingly driven by commercial imperatives such as sponsorship and marketability... [w]hile there is definitely a place for films as just entertainment, something like *Reelife* operates on the premise that people don't just want to be entertained - people actually crave connection with what is going on in their community. And young people often crave having a voice, and being able to express their point of view on things important to them to the rest of the community." Based on passion, ideas and creativity, *Reelife* is a festival that celebrates, encourages and supports the diverse voices of Australia's youth through fostering the issues and creativity of young filmmakers. It seeks to imbue a multifaceted, multidimensional cultural dialogue aimed at the perspectives of youth. "Short film in particular is an effective medium for young people [to] communicate their message, because it is not so constrained by the financial costs and commercial imperatives of feature films. Thus, ideally, short film festivals that give young people an opportunity

to have a voice can be excellent forums for creating discussion and thought around community issues which do not receive enough mainstream media coverage," she says.

Unlike more prestigious film festivals such as the Sydney or the Melbourne Film Festivals, *Reelife* is a creative endeavour of Vibewire Youth Services - a non-profit organization committed to providing a space in which young people can showcase, express, exchange ideas and create dialogue through accessing media opportunities. For Dee, the festival is "the first time I have felt really passionate and engaged about working on something, because *Reelife* as a project fits in with Vibewire's goals of empowering youth through communication, and bridging gaps in perspective and understanding in the community through more representative media." Wholly supported and run exclusively by youth volunteers, *Reelife* enables and encourages the participation of young people in the creation of films with themes and issues central to their concerns and experiences. "Hopefully *Reelife* can tackle these kinds of issues by providing a forum that both encourages and presents young people's attempts to come to grips with things going on in their lives and their community that they feel strongly about," Dee adds.

Last year's winner in the categories of Best Film and Best Comedy was UWS' Rob Leggo, 26, with *Penrith Love Story*. Rob says that making the film "was a very cathartic process of self-reflection" and that it "is more autobiographical than I'd care to admit. By taking all those experiences and delivering them to camera in a matter of fact, laconic way I was able to conquer a lot of grief. Your selfish woes are really put into perspective when you hear five hundred people laughing at them!" Having studied a double major in media and working in video, both at UWS, film plays a major role in Rob's life. "I guess I've always wanted to make films and have been equally fascinated with film as a language... [f]ilm can be so universal - some of my favourite personal work is work with no dialogue at all." For those who are interested in pursuing filmmaking, it's good to know that inspiration and ideas can come from almost anywhere. "[E]very day has an idea falling out of the sky, a character that you meet, a location you scout." Adds Rob. However, he admits that "98% of these never hit the screen but [he suggests] you write them all down, lay them out on a coffee table and see where they can take you... the power tools of what I do are a pen and a notepad and they go everywhere I do. The hardest, longest part of the process is all the written stuff."

Reelife is about using our culture's most popular and powerful communication medium of film in representing, portraying and defining youth culture from the mouths of youth themselves. As Rob says "[t]he strengths in people our age stepping up and expressing themselves in such a visceral fashion is a huge benefit to our demographic and community." Through providing young people with a platform to showcase their talents and ideas to a broader audience, *Reelife* enables

young people's self expression through their films, and control over the definitions of their culture, their experiences, their lives. It encourages the specific rather than the general whilst promoting young people as active cultural agents for powerful community change.

Reelife hosts an eclectic array of short films in many genres including: comedy, drama, documentary, music, animation, and experimental films. Last year's films included all genres and dealt with issues ranging from mental illness and personal relationships, to war and indigenous life in Australian society. As organiser of this year's festival, Dee says *Reelife* hosts a variety of key themes including the politics of the war on terror, sexuality, and ethnic and cultural identity. "[T]he films this year represent a wide variety of issues and concerns, from hot-rod car culture in western Sydney to bullying at school, pop-culture, dating, and the Reality TV phenomenon," she says. As an entrant in last year's competition, Rob supports the concepts and issues that *Reelife* hosts. "The great thing about *Reelife* is that they've put a wide range of issues on the table so you get a real immersion into things that you might otherwise put to one side. Racism, sexuality, environmental [issues], politic[s] - it's all there. And it's delivered with such raw passion by the filmmakers that you cannot help but be moved." This year, young entrants from all cultural, socio-economic backgrounds and geographically diverse areas are taking part in this year's festival and will have the opportunity to showcase their films.

As Dee suggests, "[y]outh are an unusual section of society - one which has its own very real and specific problems and issues, but which is not treated as a distinct voting group at elections." *Reelife* seeks to fill that silence, that gap which so many other film and media festivals tend to overlook. Through its major aim of creating a cultural space for Australia's youth, *Reelife* allows the diverse and often marginalized silenced local voices of youth to inform public cultural discourse. In sponsorship of youth culture, *Reelife* short film festival is proudly supported by Vibewire Youth Services, Metro Screen Australia, the Sydney Morning Herald, and the Foundation for Young Australians.

"[Y]oung people are often classed as a homogenous group by the media (often in terms of negative representations), where they could be exploring more positive aspects of young people's involvement in the community," Dee says. Rather than merely producing big budget films that promote an unfaithful representation of true life, *Reelife* documents youth perspectives and traces real events, real people, real issues, real lives. It offers a truer reflection of the political, cultural, social and economic contexts of the lives of the people who produce and participate in it - young people themselves - not industry, nor the mainstream media. It's about hearing the voices of young people rather than of someone else's. It not only imitates life, it IS life - 'Reel Life'. It does not simply ask what is visually and aesthetically pleasing on the screen, but seeks to ask a much deeper and important question: What concerns you? What are the politics affecting your life? It asks how are Australia's young people's lives affected

not only on a national level but at a local and everyday level? It asks not what you can do for the film industry but conversely and more importantly, what can film do for you? And by doing so it seeks to empower the youth population from all diverse regions of our nation. Only in its second year, *Reelife* has already made an impact and will continue to grow even stronger. Rob says "I have faith that as an old man of 35 years I'll be able to walk back into the Valhalla and see the essence of *Reelife* still promoting grass roots, honest filmmaking."

For those who are contemplating making a short film, Rob recommends to "[d]o anything, everything, just talk less and do more! This community has too many people complaining and gas-bagging and not enough people articulating their dreams and agendas in a meaningful way. *Reelife* is giving you the forum to present a film without putting too much stress on the budget, so pick up your aunty's handycam and say what you have to say already!" Not inclined to slow down, Rob is currently working on three projects including an indigenous cultural heritage documentary, is involved in the multimedia element of a local musical, and is also writing his next short film.

Reelife once again plays a pivotal role in this youth cultural movement. As entrants are not required to be student filmmakers, *Reelife* films are judged not on technicality, but focuses on creatively communicating and channelling youth voices. Please join us for this fabulous and unique event. To keep the theme of supporting youth alive, all proceeds and ticket sales contribute to the running of the festival next year. Last year's festival was a fabulous success attracting a large audience packing the Valhalla Cinema. This year's promises to be even bigger and better bringing the latest and greatest from our young culture makers. There's sure to be something that will inspire or intrigue everyone.

Reelife will be touring UWS as well as other campuses, NSW regional centres and is even set to go interstate. This year's festival, to be held on Sunday 28 September at the Valhalla Cinema, will once again be showcasing its finalists' talents and creativity with prizes awarded in several categories including: Best Film; Best Documentary; Best Comedy; Best Cinematography; and Runners Up. Entrants will all compete to win \$3000 worth of equipment hire, an all-expenses paid course in film production, and a DVD player as well as many other prizes. As usual, due to the high calibre of the films, competition will be tough. But whilst there are only a few official winners, all films should be considered winners for helping create a powerful tapestry of the Reel Lives of youth.

For more information check out the website: www.Vibewire.net/reelife or email: reelife@vibewire.net. If you are interested in hearing further about Rob's projects, he can be contacted at: medialab@uws.edu.au.

In order to get to know a bit more about some of the roles up for elections and the people currently in those roles, I spoke to two of the council members and asked them about their experiences.

INTERVIEW WITH A VP: Michael Baker



- ***Tell us a bit about yourself***

First year, mature age, Environmental Planning (Town Planning) student;

26 years old native of Blacktown committed to God;

Background in hospitality, and currently working in a city hotel;

Have travelled throughout the Asia Pacific region;

Enjoy volunteer work, and currently volunteering with an agencies providing home care for the sick; and aspire to local council, in Planning capacity; or education.

- ***You have recently moved from being a general rep to VP. How have you found the transition?***

It is quite a privilege to have been promoted into Vice Presidency. The position of VP is quite a responsibility and the role is an important one. It has taken some time to adapt, but luckily I've been supported by others within the Student Association. I'm also grateful to the previous VP of Uni-Link, Shazaad Kasmani, who contributed so much to its establishment and smooth running. My experience as VP has, so far, been very interesting and fulfilling.

- ***What are the best and worst aspects of being a VP?***

It's been such a whirlwind of activities, I haven't really had the chance to categorise my experiences. I can say that the position of VP is challenging, as is the case, I'm sure, with any position of representation. There is also the difficulty sometimes in finding a moment to relax between the activities and duties of my office, study, work, etc. In fact, much to my chagrin, I haven't had the opportunity to start a new book or thoroughly read the paper since starting on at university and the Student Association.

Quite honestly though, the various other aspects of this position make up for things like not having time for a comprehensive study of The Herald. Being in the position of VP has given me the chance to do something positive for the students here at Nirimba. It's has been a great challenge, as I've mentioned, to balance curricular activities with other non-curricular activities; and I've been encouraged to priorities and use my time wisely. I'm sure all these things are character building, & essential to life beyond uni. Beyond this, I've had the opportunity to meet some really interesting people and I'm learning more about myself every day.

- ***What is expected of a General rep in this committee?***

Being a General Rep is both challenging and fun. The sort of person who is most likely to succeed in this role is someone who has at heart the best interest of their fellow students. This person is not necessarily selfless, but is cognizant of the fact that, in order for them to get the most of university the environment in which they study and the people within that environment must be both happy and healthy. A General Rep should be someone who is willing to put in some time to see that the duties of their position are fulfilled. Beyond that, their duties should be fulfilled in such a way as to encourage unity within their committee and support the overall functioning of Uni-Link and its integration with the other areas of the Student Association. It is important for the student in a position of General Rep to be someone who can manage their time so as they may be able to enjoy their experiences and be an example for others. All this and more will help the General Rep of a committee in the Student Association.

- ***What has been the highlight of this year for you?***

Quite honestly, I wouldn't be able to pick from the many great experiences I've had. In terms of Uni-Link, it was probably getting to know some of the International students in my role as Int'l Officer. There are some great people on campus, and I'm glad it was my duty to seek them out.

Continued from previous page.....

In terms of being a member of the Student Association, I'd have to say it was my first meeting of the Campus Council as Vice President. I was very nervous that day for some reason. But, luckily the person sitting next to me just happened to say something that made me believe it wasn't a mistake to have attended. It was then a little easier to give my report and contribute in other ways to the proceedings. There have been many special experiences, and these are the two that come most quickly to mind.

- ***Why would you encourage students to nominate themselves for a position in the Campus Council?***

In fact I would encourage the student to do what they feel is most appropriate to the achievement of their goals and would be most beneficial in helping their fellow students. Much can be done in a position on the Student Association, and some people will flourish here. Having said that, we all may contribute to a healthy, happy university environment through our actions and interactions with others on campus. I hope we all contribute to campus life in the way that best suits our God given talents.

- ***What are your hopes for the future of the campus/ association?***

I would hope that both the Student Association and campus be allowed, and encouraged to grow and develop in their capacity to support university students. Some major issues that now threaten to stand in the way of that growth and development involve the current Commonwealth Government's ethos on higher education. Under the current government our University of Western Sydney will see \$30,000,000 taken from its already stretched budget; and a law enacted that would practically abolish the Student Association. My hope is that these issues do not inhibit the beautification and maturation of our university.

INTERVIEW WITH A PRESIDENT: Luke Costello

- ***Tell us a bit about yourself*** - I am a final year Property Economics Student, living on campus, and come from Orange in the Central West of NSW.
- ***Briefly describe your position on the student association*** - President, overlooking the running of the Association.
- ***What has been the highlight of this year for you?*** Highlight has been working with a great team, who are here for all the right reasons - the students.
- ***What are the best and worst aspects of being President?*** Best is that you lead something which does so much good. The worst is that when something goes wrong, the buck stops with the President.
- ***What kinds of things are expected of a student representative?*** A genuine desire to help out your fellow students, hard work to make campus a more enriched place, and having an interest in the position you are undertaking, whether it be through a student welfare or sporting position on the council.
- ***Why would you encourage students to nominate themselves for a position on the Campus Council?*** Being a member of the campus council gives you an insight into how things work at the next level. You have a real input into how things are run. It gives students a practical experience, which coincides nicely with their degree.
- ***What are your hopes for the future of the campus/association?*** That a group of passionate students join the Nirimba Students Association and it grows from strength to strength, by continuing the great work of this year's committee. I hope that the campus can grow with the help of all precinct partners, and that the politics can be put aside, with staff realizing who they are here for, and who keeps them in a job.

Is there more to University than study and lectures?

Can you make a difference?

Are you interested in entertainment, sport, food,
student issues and a better campus lifestyle?

What?? Yes!!?? Then Read on;

We Need You

Nirimba Elections

21st Oct - 23rd Oct

All University organisations have something in common; ***“they are governed by students who are elected by other students”***

Your Nirimba Students Association has elections coming up soon and we need your nominations **Now.**

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Elections for the Students' Association of UWS, Nirimba Campus Inc
are to be held on Tuesday 21st – Thursday 23rd October, 2003.

Nominations are hereby called for the following elected student positions:

CAMPUS COUNCIL

The following 4 positions are to be filled by
General Election.

President
General Secretary
Publications Officer
Activities Officer

FACILITIES & SERVICES COMMITTEE

The following 4 positions are to be filled by
General Election.

Vice President
3 x General Representatives

SPORTS & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The following 5 positions are to be filled by
General Election.

Vice President
4 x General Representatives

UNDERGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE & WELFARE COMMITTEE

The following 5 positions are to be filled by
General Election.

Vice President
4 x General Representatives

Nomination forms maybe obtained from the Fishbowl, building C21, between 10am and 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and between 9.00am and 12noon Friday. An Information Pack will be given out with the Nomination Form at the Fishbowl.

Nominations close at the Fishbowl at 5.00pm, Monday 13th October 2003.

Candidates should submit a personal photograph and a policy statement of no more than one hundred and fifty (150) words for circulation to members.

Only financial members whose home campus is shown by the University to be Blacktown shall be entitled to vote, in or nominate for, elections of the Students' Association of UWS, Nirimba Campus Inc.

Gay Bzadough
Independent Returning Officer



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