

Opinion

Editor questions collection and use of summer fees

by Jackie Skaluba

Sometimes the strangest things happen. And no one questions them. And that's stranger still.

A funny thing happened on my way to an Associates Degree. ACC began charging a summertime student activities fee, but didn't offer any summertime student activities. Funnier than that -- the students didn't even question it.

I had heard that college students are notoriously poor, but ACC students must be the exception because they paid money for a service not rendered without complaint.

There were no sports events. Was the weight room available for student use? Student Senate received no extra monies with which to negotiate ticket discounts (from Alpena Civic Theatre and Thunder Bay Theatre) for students, and the campus newspaper was not published during the summer months.

Contact was made with Mike Hood, Dean of Admissions, who said the numbers were not readily available -- that those "figures don't exist." He did say they would be made available to *The Polemic* at a later date.

From the Board of Trustees minutes, I discovered that generated contact hours for the summer was 2,339. The student services fee is \$2 per contact hour, which could generate \$4,678.

This is not an absolutely accurate figure because there is a cap of 14 hours/maximum charge per student in the summer session. I don't know how many students this affects. But perhaps, given the information available, we can conclude it's a fairly accurate ball park figure.

If the mystery money wasn't used for summertime student activities, where did it go? Was it used to balance the budgets of the previous semester? Held in reserve for the following semester?

My question is this: why call it a student services fee when it's not being used for services during the semester in which it was collected?

During the summer semester, some instructors suggested that their students attend a play or musical performance as part of their class. Without the ticket discounts provided by Student Senate, prices at Thunder Bay Theatre were approximately \$11 a person -- a bit steep for some budgets; but should instructors drop these requirements? A bare-bones curriculum isn't the answer.



What is the celebration really about?

by Kirstine Titus

Lately there has been an incessant amount of talk about the year 1992 and how much it means to us -- as Americans. In fact, it is looked upon as un-American to not get out our flags and hip-hooray for an event that

excludes a large chunk of the American population. This event that I am moaning and groaning about is the 500th anniversary of "discovered" America.

What angers me so about this harmless celebration, you may

ask? What disturbs me is the fact, the obvious fact, that we seem to blatantly disregard and that is that Columbus didn't discover America! Yep, sorry, there was life before we decided to blunder our way across the ocean and sink our greedy claws into the "land of opportunity".

The Native Americans who had been living on their land for years are the rightful "owners" of America. But, of course, in our pompous, self-righteous delusion we believe we are the promised ones, we are the brave warriors of the new world. These people are invisible to us.

I admit that they were invisible to me until I heard a Native American speak about this matter at a conference recently. I, in my ignorance, had forgotten a crucial part of American history.

You, as readers, would have been spared my ramblings if it had not been for an article printed in the Alpena News this month.

This article stated, "The year 1992 means so much to all Americans. Five hundred years ago Christopher Columbus set foot in the 'New World' and we have not been the same since."

Well, that's right. We haven't been the same since. Since that year we have murdered, burned, degraded, and virtually destroyed the Native American's proud culture. We have stripped them of their land.

I'm sure some of you are thinking, "What does she want from us? I mean, I'm sure. We've already given them Indians better fishing rights! Now, we gotta give 'em something else?"

Well, if that is what you're thinking then I'm afraid you're right. We do have to give them something back, and that is a little dignity. So, I'm sorry, but this year should not be a joyful celebration but a mournful plea for forgiveness.

Proposed book exchange might save students \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

by Yvonne LaFave

\$46.05, \$59.95, \$50.40: these numbers run rampant through the minds of students leaving the campus bookstore. These are some of the prices for used books...used?

If the student is a first semester

college student, it may take some time to adjust. The price of books is something public school students have previously ignored.

Do books really cost that much?

Yes - books do cost a lot.

How does the system work? ACC's bookstore buys new books...At the end of each semester, Follett Books buys used books for a percentage of the original price. The bookstore then purchases the used books and

restocks the shelves for the upcoming semester.

Obviously, the cost of the used book is affected by repurchase, by the time it takes to inventory and restock books, by overhead expenses such as lights, heat, insurance, salaries.

Taking all this into consideration, the book store is probably charging the student a "fair price" and no one is probably vacationing in Bermuda on profits from the college owned and operated bookstore.

However, on some campuses, students have organized an end of the semester book trade. Students who want to get a bit more for their used books, and students seeking a "good deal", meet and exchange. Often these exchanges are sponsored and run by the student governments.

According to Terry Rock, Director of College Relations at Delta Community College, "while there is no book trade organized this year, book-trades in the past have been successful with a lot of students doing business."

Student Senate Representative Rose Hunt commented, "We just got into office and there hasn't been any discussion about a book trade, but students could definitely bring it up at a meeting for formal discussion."

Food for thought?

