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New Laurier organization hopes
to help students understand alcohol

The name Bacchus probably reminds most people of the Greek god of wine and revelry but to Brenda Davy of Burlington, a student at Wilfrid Laurier University, the name stands for challenge and a new way of looking at drinking.

Bacchus is the acronym for Boosting Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University Students and is the first such organization in Canada.

Miss Davy, a graduate of Lord Elgin Secondary School, Burlington, became interested in the organization when she heard that the university administration was looking for a co-ordinator and saw the opportunity for a challenge. She is a fourth-year business student.

"Bacchus wants to promote responsible drinking among students," Davy said. "It does not seek the abolition of alcohol on camps."

The organization attempts to enlighten university students about the effects heavy consumption of alcohol has on a person, physically and otherwise. Students are made aware of the local problems involved as well as the risks taken when alcohol is abused.

Bacchus recently held an alcohol awareness week at Laurier where a volunteer breathalyzer was set up at the university pub, Wilf's. Its aim was to show students that it doesn't take much liquor or beer to endanger driving ability. Also displaying during the week were films and slides which showed other effects of alcohol.

Davy has also met with residence supervisors, hoping to get students to plan parties sensibly. She wants students to serve food when consuming alcohol and offer soft drinks as an alternative to alcohol at parties.

Fred Nichols, dean of students at Laurier, played a major part in setting up the organization at Laurier and feels that Miss Davy has taken on the responsibility well. "Brenda is doing a super job," he said.

Brenda Davy is presently sending information about the organization to other campuses in Ontario and hopes they will offer such services to their students.

Davy and the dean of students think the organization, which was established originally at the University of Florida due to concern over heavy drinking and alcohol abuse among its students is a great success in enlightening students at Wilfrid Laurier University. It has given some of them a whole new perspective toward drinking.

"We're not out to make teetotalers out of Wilfrid Laurier students," Davy said. "We simply want to inform people here about alcohol and the problems it can cause if used unwisely."