

A Message From The Editors

Hello again! Here is issue two of the Beat and I hope you enjoy it as much as the first one. There is a variety in this edition ranging from homesickness to bananas. I would just like to remind everyone about the new layout of the ASUS website. Check it out and voice your opinion. Well that is all until next month. If you need me, you know the e-mail.

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Homesickness Hurts, Talking Helps

By: Zara McAlister

University students are well-aware that November is a stressful month for academics. While winter vacation is rapidly approaching with the opportunity to reunite with family and friends, midterms, essays, tests and exams have taken over our lives, taking a mental and physical toll. These demanding situations lead to depression, anxiety and even homesickness, especially for new students who come from different provinces or countries.

Feeling homesick isn't merely expressed by kids going to camp for their first time in the summer, or by high school students going on exchange for a term. It is also widely felt by university students in their first year. However, students often shy away from the topic because they are embracing new responsibilities away from home by becoming independent. Consequently, students feel isolated when they should be enjoying their university experience. Although transitioning into a new environment where residences become home and cafeteria food substitutes for homemade meals is effortless for some students, this is not necessarily the case for everyone. Research reveals that signs of homesickness often appear immediately after entering an unfamiliar location, but it can occur at any time of the year—especially during periods of stress.

Luckily, there are resources offered by the university, or informal methods of coping with homesickness. Queens University offers a Health, Counselling and Disability service located in the LaSalle building on campus. Counsellors offer single or long term sessions, and they can also assist a student in finding an off campus counsellor in the Kingston community. If students are uncomfortable speaking with a counsellor, than friends or family members who are most likely feeling the same way can be supportive. Regular and frequent communication with family might be helpful, although this is a personal decision. To relieve stress, try taking short breaks between assignments, exercise and eat well, and relax for an evening or two. Join a club - academic, social or sports - to make like-minded friends who share similar interests. Such activities will help you integrate into the university experience by establishing a comfortable routine.



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Student Voices:

What Are Your Plans For The Winter Break

Nathan Martin

Zachary O'Keefe

Alex Munn



"Wearing a brand new christmas sweater."

"Relaxing. Going to need this break after exams."

"Hanging out with my friends from back home."

Facebook: Friend or Foe?

By: Megan Cui

If you ever find yourself with a guilty feeling in your gut after clocking an obscene number of hours on Facebook, here's something to celebrate: according to recent and extensive research regarding Facebook usage and social functioning, there are numerous benefits to the creeping and perusing deemed a waste of time.

Aside from your hourly dose of juicy updates about your friends, Facebook generates something known to social scientists as Social Capital. This is the sum of resources we accumulate when we form networks of relationships and acquaintances. This means having that friend hook you up with a job or even that friend who knows how to hook up your DSL line.

In an increasingly comfortable and technology-driven world where we can travel more frequently and further, virtually talking to anyone on the face of the earth, we find ourselves having more acquaintances and friends but little time to socialize with them face-to-face. Though close friends are invaluable, researchers have found that a diverse set of acquaintances can be beneficial for various reasons, such as having a rich pool

of resources at our disposal. Luckily for us, Facebook is an excellent tool for keeping track of our acquaintances and people we don't have the opportunity to see on a daily basis.

You might have heard on more than one occasion the popular argument that Facebook reduces our social skills, turning our generation into virtual hermits. But did you know that many articles have praised Facebook's ability to increase the amount of face-to-face social interaction amongst its users? For instance, the event planning feature allows you to quickly and easily plan a party. Something as simple as asking a friend out for coffee is one of the reasons why we find Facebook highly useful. If that's not reason enough, when we look at the grand scheme of things, increased social capital has been linked to safer communities, increased public health, and lower crime rates for society as a whole. So the next time someone tells you that you're wasting time, tell them you're doing them a public service.



Jacket Survey - We Want Your Opinion!

We are looking for feedback on the current state of the Queen's Arts and Science jacket and whether the words "Arts & Science" should be included underneath the word "Queen's". If you would like to provide your feedback on this matter, please fill out our jackets survey at www.queensASUS.com/jackets



Red is the New Yellow

By: Amanda Watson

Like many species before it, the Cavendish banana is on its way to extinction. Due to fungal disease that ravages the banana's natural habitat, and the mass consumption of this fruit, scientists expect to find a new variety of banana to hit the shelves in ten years time. Panama Disease targets the banana plant's roots and soil, and once the fungi start to grow, it cannot be stopped. Humans, the natural predator of the banana, have exported \$158 million dollars (US) worth of banana worldwide last year. Mass-consumption does not allow the bananas to repopulate in the areas that the Panama disease has not yet affected.

This is not the first time that a banana type has been on the endangered species list. In the 1950's, the 'Gros Michel' banana was the most sought after type. However, due to the same conditions that now faces the Cavendish, the Gros Michels were taken off the market. The Cavendish was chosen as the new 'It' banana because it is easy to transport and it has a long shelf life.

So what type of banana will replace the Cavendish? A Red Banana. It tastes like raspberries. Generally, this class of banana is used for baking, much like other sub-par vegetables/fruits. If the Cavendish is the Rolls-Royce of bananas, than the Red type resembles Mater from Disney's Cars.

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