

# Our Feathered Friends not so Friendly

By Brodie MacRAE

October the 10 marked the beginning of the bird infestation season for this school year in the music department of UPEI. Each year the Steele Building sees several occurrences of one or more birds finding their way inside through the ceiling and proceeding to frantically fly throughout the halls until someone catches it and throws it back outside. Laura MacGrath, a third year clarinetist was working in the study lab that day when a Starling unexpectedly flew down through the open ceiling tiles, bringing with it a great deal of commotion. Bill Bayer, a fourth year tubaist took the responsibility of seeing it out of the building, luring it to an open window where it happily rejoined its kin in nature.

## "CAW! CAW!"

The procedure for dealing with a wild bird has typically been to coax the bird near an open window or door and hope that it will promptly depart the building or to call maintenance and let them catch the beast, although some



"Birds!"

prefer to run away with their hands covering their faces.

Despite the seemingly harmless nature of the situation, it is something most music students hope to see remedied. The study and practice time of the students is often disrupted when unruly birds make their appearances and birds trapped in the practice rooms have often been known to leave unsanitary records of their presence behind. In addition, the problem has escalated to the point of fatality in the past. One

music student found a dead bird in a practise room during the summer of 2000 after having asked security twice to escort the bird from the building while it was still alive.

## Birds trapped in the practice rooms have often been known to leave unsanitary records of their presence behind.

This has been a problem for many years now. As Gloria Jay, the UPEI music department secretary explains, "We [the music department] moved into this building on December

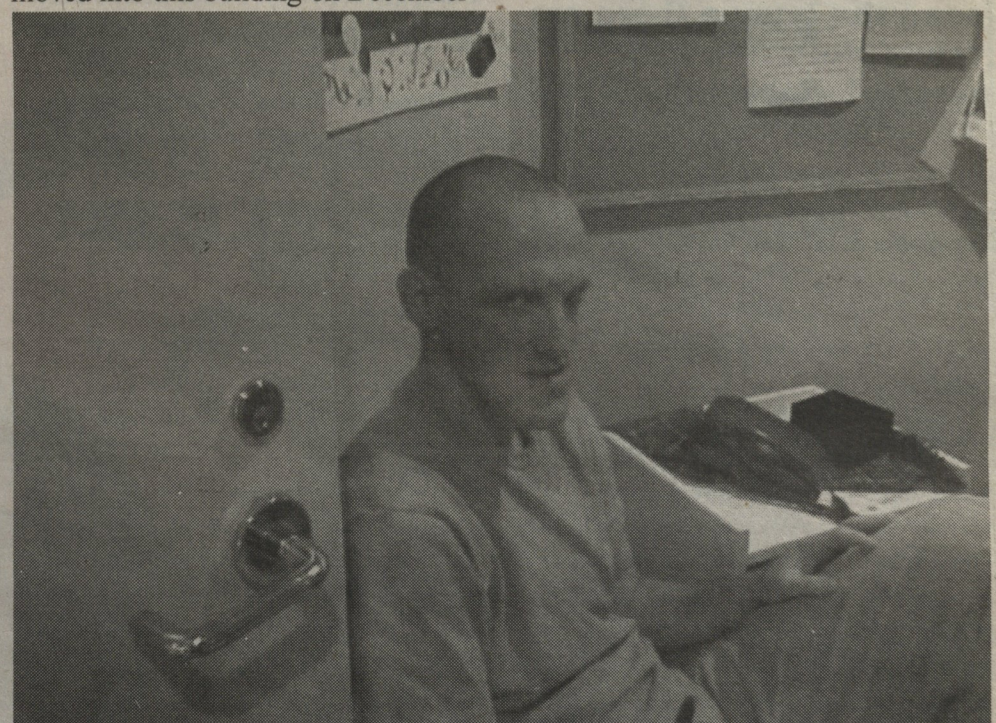
17 1974 and we've had problems with birds flying in here ever since." Due to the longevity of this issue, it would appear the birds have maintenance stumped as to the location of their secret entrance. However, maintenance was unavailable for commentary on this issue.

## "I haven't had this much fun since the time I ate that Bald Eagle."

-Scott Robinson

Most students find the situation distressing. Jeremy Hickey states, "It's kind of annoying. I mean, how are they getting in? It's not really that hard to keep birds out of a building." Krista Carruthers is also uncomfortable with birds in the music department. "It freaks the shit out of me. You're studying and suddenly a bird swoops down? This problem really needs to be addressed."

However, some students are surprising positive about this issue. "CAW! CAW!" asserts Matt Simon, a second year pianist. As well, Scott Robinson notes, "I haven't had this much fun since the time I ate that Bald Eagle."



The sound of birds isn't music to his ears.

# Be a Mentor

The In-School Mentoring program is fun and rewarding.

An adult volunteer In-School Mentor is matched to a child in a school environment. Together the Mentor and child build a positive new friendship which is of great benefit to the child and rewarding for the Mentor.

## What would be required of me as a mentor?

- One school hour per week for the school year
- At Schools in Summerside and Crapaud
- Experience – none

How do I get involved?

"Contact"

Big Brothers –  
Big Sisters  
at: 436-8122

