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Senate says no to Vermont Yankee



Photo by James Dillon III

The Vermont Progressive Party had a float at the Mardi Gras parade on Church St. in downtown Burlington on Saturday Feb. 27 celebrating the Senate decision not to relicense Vermont Yankee.

Legislature votes to close nuclear power plant when license expires in 2012

By Kayle Schnell
Technical Editor

On Wednesday Feb. 24, the Vermont Senate voted 26-4 in favor of not relicensing Vermont Yankee for operation beyond 2012 due to its mistrust of Entergy Corporation, the nuclear plant's owner.

Vermont Yankee provides approximately one-third of Vermont's electricity demand and is now under investigation for providing false information about underground pipes and the existence of radioactive leaks.

The plant's license for 40 years will expire in 2012, and it has asked for a 20-year extension.

Vermont is the only state in the country where the legislature gets to vote on relicensing a nuclear power plant and it could be the first time in more than 20 years that the public has made the decision to close a reactor. Under Vermont law, the plant cannot operate beyond 40 years without approval in both houses.

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S.A. revises outdated constitution

Despite two mass e-mails students express little interest

By Susan Bourque
Photo Editor

Members of the Constitution Advisory Council slimmed down the Student Association's (SA) constitution moving much of its contents to the bylaws. Despite being the governing document of St. Michael's student government and after solicitations from senate members, students have expressed little interest in the matter.

On Feb. 23, an e-mail from the SA was sent out to the entire student body. Two attached documents included the current constitution and a new shorter version. The message cited the current text as "lengthy, unclear, repetitive" and an ineffective governing document. The council's revisions aimed to produce a constitution "that creates a transparent and accountable Student Association."

SA president David Hiltz said this does not imply that the original constitution was not transparent and accountable but rather the council is making revisions in that spirit.

"A year ago there were some issues were brought up about some of the voting processes and some of the procedures of the SA people felt were unfair or unjust or weren't clear," Hiltz said.

The new draft redefines and outlines the duties of each office. Guidelines dictating what an SA president can do were clarified. Specifically, executive privilege was not included in the new draft. The council adjusted officers' duties, eliminating the need for executive privilege, he said.

The process began late October to early November after Hiltz called an ad hoc committee. Council members were chosen based on their expressed interest. They met almost weekly to sift through the lengthy document, Hiltz said.

Junior Ryan Socha, Ethan Allen representative, used his previous experience as secretary of student policy in making revisions.

"We spent hours going through it line by line discussing really everything that was in the document, deciding what would be in the best interest of the stu-

dents in terms of how it should be formatted," he said.

Inconsistencies, repetitive language and phrases like "have fun" were reconciled in the new draft, Hiltz said.

"Most of it was clean up," he said. "There was a lot of similarities in describing things and we decided to go through and clean that up to make more specific and easier to read."

In addition to clarifying the language and doing away with extras, the biggest change has been the set divisions. The constitution-proper, bylaws and policies have always been separate entities. This version of the constitution takes duties previously published in the constitution and puts them in the bylaws. Bylaws consist of operational procedures controlled by the senate, Socha explained.

The revision gives more power to the senate by moving things from the old constitution to the bylaws. This move allows senate members to make amendments-

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Spectrum wins cash from Fix-it-with-Five

Spectrum Youth and Family Services receives \$10,000 from students

By Lauren Chaves
Staff Writer

On Feb. 25, the Fix-it-with-Five votes were tallied, and the Spectrum Youth and Family Services organization was awarded \$10,000. With the grant, Spectrum can provide more shelter for homeless teenagers in Burlington as it now plans to build a new housing unit. The \$10,000 was an accumulation of \$5 from every student's activities fee this year. Spectrum gained 40 more votes than its non-profit contenders, COTS and Neighborkeepers.

Senior Eric Larkin, founder and chair of the Fix-it-with-Five committee, was slightly disappointed and confused by the low turnout at the panel discussion, he said. The panel featured the three non-profit



Graphic courtesy of Leah Ziegler
Fix-it-with-Five logo.

organizations speaking about what they would do if they received grant money.

"We used all forms of media on campus, even Green Up and Global Studies were aware of our event," Larkin said. Only 18 people showed up for the discussion and 12 percent of the student body voted.

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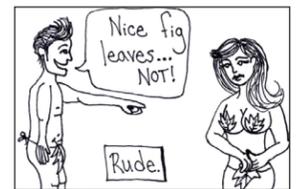
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NEWS

Esteemed economist Amartya Sen to address grads

Sen is expected to speak on the issue of justice at the 2010 commencement ceremony

By **Mary Catanzarita**
Staff Writer

World-renowned economist Amartya Sen, often referred to as the “Mother Theresa of Economics,” has been chosen to be the 2010 commencement speaker for St. Michael’s College graduation ceremonies on May 13 in Ross Sports Center.

Winner of the 1998 Nobel Memorial Prize for Economic Sciences, Sen is known worldwide for his work on famine, human development theory, welfare economics, the underlying mechanisms of poverty, gender inequality, and political liberalism.

The selection of a commencement speaker is a thorough process. Over a series of months, the rising senior class officers team up with the Honors Review Committee which includes Marilyn Cormier, director of government and community relations, Karen Talentino, vice president of academic affairs, and Pat Gallivan, vice president for institutional advancement. They formulate a list of possible choices and narrow it down to serious considerations. The list is then passed to the Board of Trustees and if the selected speaker is available the final decision is up to St. Michael’s College President Jack Neuhauser.

Amartya Sen was originally selected to be the recipient of the Honorary Degree, which is a doctorate in humanities, science, or another type of broad discipline at the 2010 graduation.

“The honorary degree is a type of recognition for someone who has exemplified some aspect of the college’s mission,” Talentino said. “In his case, he has made a

tremendous contribution to improving the lives of the world’s poorest countries and citizens.”

Since Sen had already agreed and was readily available to come to the ceremonies, the decision to ask him to speak at the commencement was simple.

“When we realized Sen was coming anyway, we knew we should take advantage of the opportunity,” Talentino said. “When we approached the students, they were willing to accept him so it all worked out really well.”

When looking for a commencement speaker, the committee is not only looking for someone who mirrors the values of St. Michael’s College, but also someone who will provide the students with a good message.

“The whole point is for someone to instill enthusiasm and vision to the students,” Talentino said.

Members of the economics department are especially thrilled to have such an esteemed economist come to campus.

“It’s an honor, not only for the economics department but also for the community at large that somebody of this caliber is coming to St. Michael’s,” said Reza Ramazani, professor of economics and department chair. “We are delighted.”

Because of the current economic situation of the country, it seems that the timing of Sen’s arrival could not have been better. The effect he is expected to have on not only the students but also the entire community is one of high standards, Ramazani said.

“When it comes to Amartya Sen,



Vermont Business Magazine

World renowned economist Amartya Sen to speak at graduation.

the kind of influence he has had is one of a transformation,” economics professor Tara Natarajan said. “He has not only transformed the way economists view the world, but also people in general which is incredibly important and beneficial to students who are graduating.”

Senior class President Amanda Matonis is equally thrilled about having Sen on campus and believes that her classmates will feel the same.

“Because of all that Sen has experienced in his life, as well as his love and knowledge of economics, and even his connection with Haiti, I think students will be very interested in what he has to say,” Matonis said.

Sen is known for his knowledge and developed theories of subjects outside direct economics, such as famine, wealth,

poverty, and welfare, Natarajan said.

“He makes us think about what money means to a person, and what the other things in our life there are other than just money and that is very powerful for students to hear,” Natarajan said. “He tends to go beyond the immediate things that bring us happiness and satisfaction.”

Sen is excited to attend the ceremony and is eager to speak to students.

“St. Michael’s is a very distinguished college with a good record of student satisfaction and producing great work,” Sen said. “I was very pleased when I was asked to be affiliated with the college,” he said.

Within Sen’s many accomplishments he often refers to the idea of justice, which is something he hopes to bring into light for the student body.

“I hope to touch on the idea of justice and pursuit of justice especially,” Sen said. “The issue of justice, rich or poor, both nationally and globally is something that I would really like to cover with the students to serve as a true learning experience.”

Regardless of what Sen discusses, the anticipation for his arrival is blooming. For many, he is the right voice to be heard during these economic times. But, for Ramazani, he is the man to show everyone what economists are truly about.

“The perception some people have about economists is that we have no heart,” Ramazani said. “Now here comes our hero, Mr. Sen. They call him Mother Theresa. Well, I have a different name for him: an economist with heart.”

CONSTITUTION: Revised by S.A.

Continued from Page 1

more easily within the organization, Socha said.

Council members consulted faculty advisor, professor emeritus Bill Wilson during the process.

“One of the reasons he was chosen was because his background is in constitutional law and has a very good understanding of that in the real world,” Hiltz said.

Wilson is a neutral party that can offer insight as to how to create a better more effective document, he said.

The Feb. 23 e-mail invited student comments and suggestions on the proposed draft. The majority of the limited responses were from senate members.

“We were hoping we would get people who have looked both documents over to offer feedback but we’ve received really minimum feedback at best,” Hiltz said.

This is the first major revision the constitution has seen in more than a decade, David Schulz, class of 2011 president said.

The new draft was introduced at the Feb. 23 meeting. A vote was supposed to take place at the last SA meeting on March 2. Due to lack of feedback, Hiltz decided to wait another week.

On March 9 there will be an open forum to discuss the document. The council will entertain any questions or comments from those in attendance.

“At this meeting Tuesday if there any issues anything people didn’t like or wanted to change we could take care of all those fixes and then send the final document out,” Hiltz said.

The senate must approve the new version with a two thirds vote for this proposal to go any further.

Should the senate pass the document, the decision would then move into the hands of the student body. The students as a whole ultimately decide whether the new constitution is ratified or vetoed, Socha said.

First-year Josh Miranda said he read the e-mail from the SA but did not review the attached documents due to their lengthy size. He intends to read it before the vote takes place.

“I would have to read what it says first then vote on it,” Miranda said. “I think if you’re going to vote on something you have to know what you’re voting about.”

FIVE: Spectrum wins Fix-it-with-Five cash

Continued from Page 1

The Fix-it-with-Five committee will be going to Spectrum in downtown Burlington to deliver the check personally. Fix-it-with-Five and Spectrum are trying create a service project for St. Michael’s students.

Originally, the Student Association (SA) gave Fix-it-with-Five \$100 for startup costs. Larkin said he hopes that next year they will receive more money from the SA because it did not cover all of the costs.

“We received a private donation from my parents at the beginning of the year,” he said. “We had to mail 96 letters to different organizations, which is expensive.”

Laura Marlow Latka, director of marketing and development at Spectrum, said that the staff is very grateful of Fix-it-with-Five for the grant. Spectrum has housed and worked with homeless youths in the Burlington area for the past 40 years. Most of the teenagers who seek refuge at Spectrum have escaped from abusive family situations or have been kicked out by their parents for substance abuse problems, among other reasons. Latka said that the Spectrum has worked with more than 3,000 young adults a year from ages 12-22 years old.

Spectrum currently has a shelter that is used for emergency situations only in which teenagers can only stay for three months. The shelter had to turn down 143 homeless youths due to lack of space, a 91% increase in turn-aways from previous years, Latka said. Spec-

“Some kids come in here not knowing how to balance a check book, or do laundry. We teach them how to be self-sufficient.”

Laura Latka
Spectrum Marketing Director

trum plans to use the grant to build a new Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing for teens that desire and have progressed to be more independent.

Spectrum offers the basic amenities such as food, hygienic goods, and clothes. They also have access to substance abuse counselors, school, caseworkers, and doctors.

Latka described the shelter for teenagers as “a place to go to and leave with the rest of your life.”

Spectrum focuses on preparing their residents for a future of their own.

“Some kids come in here not knowing how to balance a check book, or do laundry,” Latka said. “We teach them how to be self-sufficient.”

Spectrum debated if it should create rooms that could fit two teenagers or design singles considering that the teenagers would have a higher success rate at becoming independent by living alone. During the winter, the lives of teenagers without a home become dire. Currently there are 25 young adults on

the waiting list, wanting desperately to claim a place to sleep.

“It feels horrible to turn away a kid; it’s really cold out,” Latka said. “When we have absolutely no more space left for a bed we give them survival kits that include socks, hats, hand warmers, food, water and blankets. I definitely took my family for granted.”

Sophomore Lauren Fish believes that the \$10,000 will create a substantial change, which a requirement in its mission statement on their Web site.

Zielger wants the student body to get more involved.

“All our meetings are open, and we are always look for more input,” she said.

After this year Fix-it-with-Five will lose four committee members, two seniors and two others studying abroad. On Monday, there will be applications sent out for next year’s Fix-it-with-Five committee. There is no limit set currently, since they have a low amount of participants.

Fix-it-with-Five will be having elections within the committee to find out who will replace Larkin when he graduates this spring. When asked about who could replace him he said juniors Siobhan Lavery and Leah Ziegler expressed interest for the position.

In the future, Fish and Zielger will consider other non-profit organizations for the \$10,000 if they can prove to have the ability to substantiate change.