
Monday, September 20, 2010

September 07, 2010

Grad House to open Friday

By Marilyn Smulders

Tools for this article: [Email](#) | [Print](#) | [Comment \(7\)](#) | [Share](#)

Ever thought you'd be sitting down to a fresh, savory crepe and a cold brew on campus?

Your wish is about to be fulfilled. The newly renovated Grad House at 1252 LeMarchant Street will be open for business on Friday, Sept. 10. The new Grad House is almost across the street from the old, which was torn down a year ago.

Although the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students, better known as DAGS, had hoped to be open months before, DAGS president Eric Snow is happy to now be throwing open the doors and showing off spiffy new quarters.

"It's very exciting to see this through," says Mr. Snow, who is doing his master's of public administration. "This kind of venue has been missing from campus and we're thrilled to be bringing it back."

There's a "bear-with-us" hitch however. Until some changes are made, occupancy is limited to 50 people.

With the blessing of the Board of Governors, the university has committed to renovations that will bring capacity up to 110. Those renovations, which include adding an exit to the patio, adding another access from the first floor to second and expanding the women's washroom upstairs, are expected to be complete by the end of the year.

"It will be a little bit tricky in the beginning but we have to be open for our customers," says Mark Jurkovic, manager of the Grad House.

DAGS became aware of the shortcomings with the new space in early April during the building inspection. It was determined there wasn't enough washroom space or sufficient exits to accommodate more than 50 people. Then there was the hold up with the furniture, which had to go through the university's tender process.



Michael van den Hoek and Eric Snow sidle up to the Grad House's bar.

The new furniture, including pub height tables and chairs, is on its way, although the patio furniture is already in place.

The new digs are open and airy and not too bright, featuring refinished oak floors and some of the 1970s-era Tiffany ceiling fixtures from the old building. The large brick fireplace acts as a natural divider between the front stage and the bar area. To the side, is the “Red Room,” a cozy nook for people to study or read.

Upstairs, there’s the DAGS office at the top of the stairs and a boardroom, available for the use of students and societies.

Introducing Cafe Leopold

When the choice on campus is calorie-laden muffins, pizza or Timbits, you can be forgiven for getting excited about the prospect of European-inspired lunch offerings.

Sarah Schwarz of Crêperie Mobile from the Halifax Farmers Market will be providing the food and is calling her spot at the Grad House “Cafe Leopold.”

“Most of the ingredients will be sourced from the farmers market,” she explains. “We’ll pay attention to what we can get seasonally.”

On the menu are open sandwiches, ploughman’s lunch, filo-crust pizza, savory crepes, soups and pastries. The coffee -- organically grown and fairly traded -- is from Laughing Whale in Lunenburg.

“We’re going to experiment and see what people like,” says Ms. Schwarz, who is originally from Germany.

Cafe Leopold will also offer vegetarian and gluten-free options. It will be open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



On the patio.